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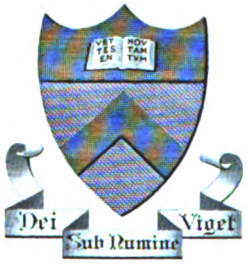

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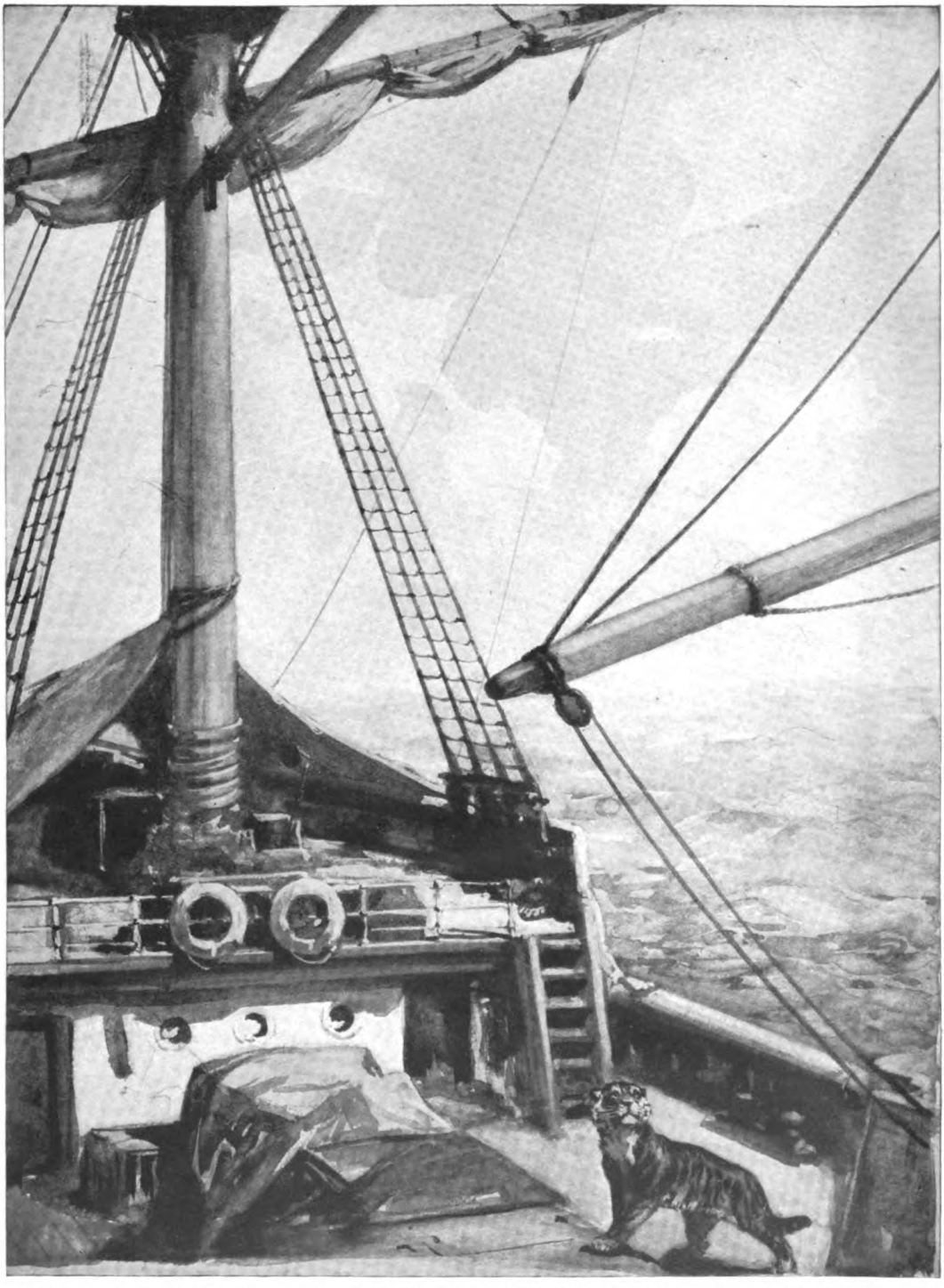


"PRESENTLY THE TIGER LOOKED UP AND SAW THE THREE MEN OVERHEAD, AND DELIBERATELY SPAT AT THEM AND SAID SOMETHING THAT SOUNDED LIKE 'HRRRRHH!'"

(*See page* 8.)

NEW YORK

THE TRAMP AND THE TIGER.

By MORLEY ROBERTS

Illustrated by Harry Rountree.

WHEN the *Star of the East* had taken her lumber aboard at Vladivostock, she hauled out from her berth and anchored in the bay. She was an old-fashioned three-masted ocean tramp, and belonged to an owner who did not believe a ship could be a ship unless she could sail when she couldn't steam. But otherwise she was built for business and not for pleasure. Mr. Sadler, her chief mate, and Mr. Quin, her second mate, were agreed upon this point, though they were of extremely different dispositions. The only person on board entirely satisfied with the tramp and himself was Captain Cradgett. He was still ashore in Vladivostock when the sun went down, and the two mates sat and smoked in the chart-house.

"What I want to do is to get into the passenger trade, sir, just as soon as I can," said Mr. Quin, as he lighted another cigarette. "As you so frequently say, it's not excitin' in this kind of trade, and there's nobody to speak to."

Mr. Sadler nodded, and then shook his head in the most melancholy manner.

"Ah," he said, "I thought I was goin' to have an excitin' time, too, when I went to sea. Once when I was in Liverpool a very nice young woman said to me, 'How excitin' it must be to go to sea, Mr. Sadler.' And what I said to her was, 'Excitin'! Oh, miss, you think it's excitin', do you? Why, my dear, it's dull—dull to a degree. Drivin' a bus in the Whitechapel Road is far more excitin' and joyous.' She couldn't understand that."

"Why, yes, sir," said the second mate,

eagerly; "but somethin' always may happen, you know. Sometimes I wish I hadn't been a sailor at all, but a traveller."

"What would you have travelled in?" asked Mr. Sadler.

"I don't mean that sort of traveller," said the second mate. "I mean wanderin' about on land, with real adventures."

"They don't happen so thick even on land," said the melancholy chief mate. "Don't you rely on books, Mr. Quin, to tell the truth about land any more than about the sea."

"Well, but there's big-game huntin'," said the second mate. "Surely that's excitin'."

"Is it?" asked the incredulous mate. "As far as I've read it amounts to hidin' up a tree all night and catchin' colds and cramps. And how would you like to face a tiger? Oh, a tiger would disgruntle you. It's a very awkward animal, a tiger."

"I don't know that I ever actually saw one," said Mr. Quin. "But with a good gun——"

"Did you say you never saw a tiger?" interrupted Mr. Sadler, with peculiar earnestness.

"Well, no, I never actually did," said Quin.

"Ah," said the first mate, with an air of the deepest thought, "but you can see number two hatch, Mr. Quin, can't you?"

"Well, I can if I get up," replied the second mate.

"And it's all clear of lumber, ain't it?" asked Mr. Sadler.

"Yes, sir," said the second mate. "Wasn't I wonderin' why Captain Cradgett insisted on keepin' number two clear? There might have been a deck load there as well as anywhere else."

Mr. Sadler looked at him with a very strange expression and shook his head.

"Oh, no, there mightn't," he said, firmly. "That's where you're off it, Mr. Quin."

"Off it—why, sir?" asked the second mate.

"Yes, off it—a long way off it," repeated Mr. Sadler. "Number two hatch is bein' kept clear for a cage, Mr. Quin."

"A what?" asked the astonished second mate.

"I said a cage," repeated the melancholy mate. "The captain would do it, though I urged him not to with tears in my eyes."

"Not to what, sir?" asked Quin, inharmoniously.

"Why, just what I said," repeated Mr. Sadler, out of an even thicker gloom.

"Oh, no; you haven't said yet what the cage is for," said the second mate.

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Sadler. "Don't I keep tellin' you it's for a tiger!"

"For a tiger?" asked the second mate, in great astonishment.

"Why, yes, Mr. Quin, a three parts grown tiger; a clouded Manchurian tiger they call it," said the chief mate, rubbing his forehead

thoughtfully. "We're takin' it to Calcutta for the Rajah of Jugpore. I do hope it won't get out. If that tiger did get out, Mr. Quin, you could have all the huntin' for me. I'd be up aloft as far as I could get. That's where I'd be. But I suppose it'd tickle you to death to hunt a tiger with a hand-spike in the middle of the Indian Ocean."

"Yes, it'd be awkward if he did get out," said Quin, cheerfully. "At least, I suppose so."

The next morning a lighter was towed by a tug alongside the tramp. On board the lighter was a big cage, and in the tug was Captain Cradgett. When he had got on board the tramp he climbed up to the bridge and, rubbing his hands cheerfully, said:—

"Well, there you are, Mr. Sadler. This finishes us at this forsaken place. You can sign for one three-parts-grown clouded Manchurian tiger, shipped in good condition, with the end of his tail in doubt."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Mr. Sadler, as if he hadn't quite understood what was said to him; "but why's the end of his tail in doubt?"

"Because he got it nipped puttin' it out when he was bein' lowered into the lighter," said Captain Cradgett. "He made a deal of fuss about it, and kept on turnin' round to look at it in the most surprisin' way. So make out the receipt as I'm tellin' you."

The cage looked a good strong cage. It was made of hard wood, clamped here and there with iron.

"He'll never get out of that," said Captain Cradgett, joyously, when the tiger stood on his hind legs and clawed at his bars. "But he looks awfully as if he'd like to eat a sailor-man, don't he? What do you think of him, Mr. Quin?"

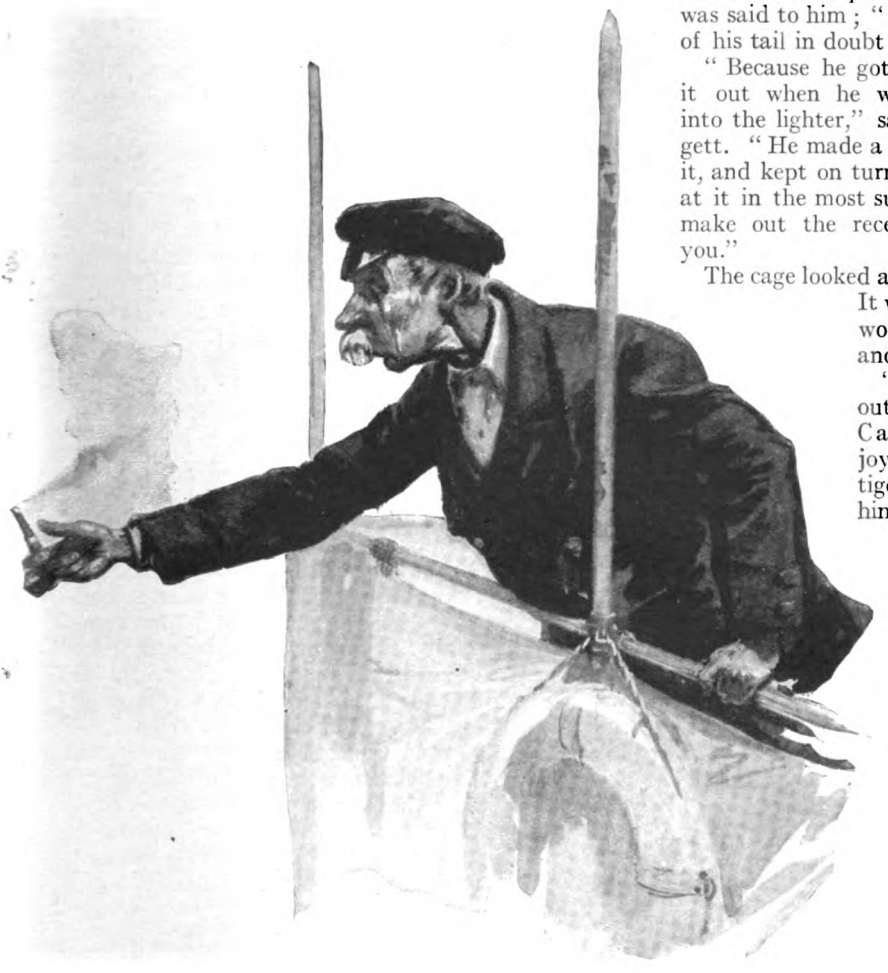
"Oh, he's splendid," said the second mate, withenthusiasm.

"He's all righs as long as he't inside that cage," said Mr. Sadler, doubtfully.

"It'll be your business and Mr. MacIntosh's to see he stays inside," said the skipper. "I'm to get a premium on him if I deliver him safe. They offered him to Captain Parker, of the *Rising Sun*, and to Watts, of the *Tower of London*, and they wouldn't have him."

And half an hour later the *Star of the East* was on her way to Calcutta, with sawed lumber, some soya beans, a few bales of silk, and one tiger in good condition, though one of the joints of his tail was still in doubt.

The crowd took a mighty interest in the



"'HE'LL BE OUT OF IT ONE OF THESE DAYS,' SAID MR. SADLER. 'I SEE IT IN HIS HOPEFUL EYE.'"

tiger, and spent most of the second dog-watch every evening sitting round him romancing. A tough from Liverpool, called Ryan, said he'd rather face that tiger than the mate of the *Wanderer*. He said that facing that tiger would be a joyous picnic after sailing in a Cape Horner with a mate whose only exercise was knocking sailormen down and kicking them up.

As a ship must have a subject to talk about, the tiger was their chief joy all the way down the China coast and through the Straits of Malacca into the Indian Ocean, and even till they were close up with the Nicobars. And if they talked about it in the fo'c'sle it was equally talked of by the skipper and his mates. Captain Cradgett said he was beginning to get very fond of it. But Mr. Sadler was nervous when he saw the tiger sharpening his claws.

"He'll be out of it one of these days," said Mr. Sadler. "I see it in his hopeful eye."

"You're takin' a sad view of things, sir," said the optimistic Quin.

"I never was a hopeful man," replied the miserable Mr. Sadler. "I made a mistake comin' to sea. Oh, it is that dull."

"But you take a kind of pleasure in thinkin' about him gettin' out," said Quin. "If he did we'd catch him again."

"Ah," said the chief mate, "and what's your plan for dealin' with a large tiger loose on a deck load, and him hungry enough to scoff a ring-bolt?"

"What's my plan, sir?" asked the second mate. "Why, I'd skin up aloft and think about it," said Mr. Quin, lightly.

But the chief mate shook his head.

"It's a very good plan, too, only it ain't exactly genius," he grunted. "I could have thought of that myself. But supposin' the tiger climbed the ratlines, what would your plan be then?"

"I'd go up aloft higher still, of course," said the second mate.

"But supposin' he followed you?" urged Mr. Sadler.

"When I couldn't go any farther I should jump overboard, I suppose," said Quin.

The chief mate shook his head again.

"I think nothin' whatever of that part of your plan," he retorted. "I can't swim. Now, I've got a much better plan than that, Mr. Quin, for my notion is to get the cage strengthened. We'll see what MacIntosh has got to say about it to-morrow. If I had my way I'd rouse up a cable and pass it round and round and round and round that cage until the tiger got perfectly hopeless. I hate to see a tiger in a cage so full of hope as that tiger is."

It certainly seemed, when Great Nicobar was close aboard on the port bow, and the captain was telling the mates of the adventures he had had there in a sailing ship in the early days, that it was time to take precautions. But Captain Cradgett was an optimist, and so was Mr. Quin. Mr. Sadler's pessimism, although far-reaching and very thorough, did not save him. Indeed, as he once remarked blackly to Captain Cradgett, there is nothing like being too thorough for making a man late for his market. Just as Captain Cradgett was enlarging upon the miserable appearance and character of the inhabitants of the Great Nicobar, there was an awful squeal and uproar in the tiger's cage, and when the "old man" and his mates looked down on number two hatch they saw the clouded Manchurian three-parts through the bars.

Though he was momentarily detained by them closing on his hindquarters, there was every sign that he would be out in two shakes of a lamb's tail. It was quite easy to understand what the tiger was saying without an interpreter, and Captain Cradgett, although he was so stout, translated his message into motion before either of his mates. Although he had rarely been aloft since he was a second mate, he made a run and jump for the fore-rigging, and skipped up it as fast as if he were a boy with a bo'sun behind him. Inside fifteen seconds the distribution of the crew was as follows. The captain and both his mates were on the foreyard, Ryan and Jim Cook, the Cockney, were on the main cross-trees, while the greater number of the crew were shut up in the fo'c'sle. The cook was in his galley, armed with an ineffective saucepan; the steward was trembling in the saloon, and the whole engine-room outfit, not having been able to shut the deck door, were hastily heating slice-bars in the furnace with a view to keeping the narrow iron stairs if the tiger came that way. For now the tiger was free, after one final struggle which had the result of putting some of his fur in doubt. But at first he showed no anger, only a great curiosity.

"Walks gracefully, don't he?" said Mr. Quin, eagerly.

"I ain't admirin' his walk any," said the captain, angrily. "Didn't you tell me, Mr. Quin, that Mr. MacIntosh was goin' to reinforce that cage with iron bars? Why didn't he do it? Why didn't you see that he did it? And, Mr. Sadler, why d'dn't you listen

to me when I was always tellin' you that he might get out?"

Mr. Sadler said nothing. He thought all this was most unjust on the part of the skipper. But he was always prepared for injustice.

"The thing is," he said, presently, "to know what we're goin' to do."

"Well, and what are we goin' to do?" asked the skipper.

"Ask me another, sir," said the mate, bitterly. "You can't expect me to deal with him. But I dare say Mr. Quin's got a plan; he always lets on he has one."

"Oh, no," said Quin, modestly; "oh, no. My plan went no farther than what I said yesterday, Mr. Sadler."

"And how far was that?" asked the captain, showing some hope.

"All I said was I'd skin up aloft and think," said Quin.

"Well, didn't I do as much as that before you?" asked the skipper, angrily, "and without takin' any time to consider it either. And now you're up here, can you think?"

"I can't think if I'm hurried, sir," urged Mr. Quin. "But I think we ought to be able to lure him back somehow. We might lure him back with some meat if we had it."

"Yes, if we had it," said the captain, savagely.

"Yes, it's a very good idea," said the second mate.

And then he rubbed his chin.

"Oh, if we only had a cowboy with a lariat that he could put over him!"

"Yes, that's a very useful plan," snorted the skipper. "But where's the cowboy and his outfit?"

"I believe I've almost got the idea," said Sadler, brightening up just a little for the first time for days, "but I own it comes out of what Mr. Quin says. Suppose we roped him, sir?"

"Yes, and what with?" asked the skipper, who grew more and more nervous.

The mate turned to Mr. Quin.

"You understand me, Mr. Quin?"

"Of course, sir," said Quin. "Suppose we try and catch him in a runnin' bowline? What do you think of that?"

"That's what I meant," said Mr. Sadler, looking as unhappy as if he was going to hang with it.

"Yes, and that's what I meant," said Quin, "when I talked about a cowboy and a lariat. I was comin' to it."

"Talk, talk, talk," said the skipper, contemptuously. "Who's goin' to put it over him? Here you talk and talk, and nothin' doin',"

"ALTHOUGH CAPTAIN CRADGETT HAD RARELY BEEN ALOFT SINCE HE WAS A SECOND MATE, HE MADE A RUN AND JUMP FOR THE FORE-RIGGING."

By this time the tiger, having sniffed every hole and corner for'ard, made a couple of bounds and began to investigate the bridge and the chart-house. He displayed all the characteristics of the cat tribe when in new surroundings. Presently he looked up and saw the three men overhead, and deliberately spat at them and said something that sounded like "Hrrrrhh!"

"He seems angry," said the skipper. "Do you think he'll come up?"

As he spoke he prepared, if necessary, to ascend to the topsail yard. But Mr. Quin thought it was unlikely the tiger would try to climb up aloft while he smelt so many men down below. At that Mr. Sadler nodded as many times as a Chinese mandarin.

"Didn't I say at Vladivostock, sir, that I wouldn't take one if I was you?" he asked. "I'm not like Mr. Quin here, who brags he wants to go big game huntin'."

"Oh, does he?" asked the skipper. "Then here's his chance. You can have it all for me, Mr. Quin."

And Quin felt it was up to him to deal with the tiger or perish.

"Come, Quin, we rely on you, so think—just think," said the chief mate.

"Well," said Quin, rather unhappily, "I am thinkin', thinkin' hard, Mr. Sadler."

"Don't forget," said Mr. Sadler, "that all hands are relyin' on us, lookin' to us, and mainly to Captain Cradgett, for help and assistance in distress."

"Yes, here we are up aloft, and I don't like bein' up aloft," said the unhappy skipper. "It doesn't suit me. Though now I'm glad she's got good sticks in her, and no mistake about that."

He sat on the yard, facing aft, with his arm about the mast. On the other side sat Mr. Sadler. Mr. Quin, with his feet jammed in the narrow upper ratlines of the rigging, did his best to think. Presently he looked up.

"I want a cigarette, Mr. Sadler," he said. "I can't ever think without one."

"But do you think you can think if you do get one?" asked the "old man."

"Oh, yes, I'm sure of it, sir," said Mr. Quin.

"Then here you are," said the skipper, reluctantly producing his case. "And I hope they'll work."

The first one didn't, and the second didn't. And in the meantime the tiger didn't seem to care two straws for the way the plan-making Mr. Quin fixed him with his eye. Quin seemed to feel that he couldn't make a plan about the tiger without the tiger being in sight. He explained that to the skipper and Mr. Sadler when they groused about his slowness.

"And have you got another cigarette, sir?" he asked, presently.

"Well, take a few more," said the skipper, ungraciously, "and heave ahead. And if you do make a plan, I'll give you fifty."

And presently the second mate looked up at them with a strange expression on his face. It was rather like the breaking dawn in summer. He had a heavenly smile, or so he sometimes told Mr. Sadler. He knew it, because the girls said so.

"Have you got it, Mr. Quin?" asked Mr. Sadler, with a pessimistic sniff.

"Oh, Mr. Quin, have you got it?" asked the skipper, brightening with hope.

And suddenly the second mate's face clouded over again.

"I thought I had—I thought I very nearly had," he said, lamely.

"Come, light another cigarette;" said the skipper, feeling he might as well go all in.

And this time it seemed as if the cigarette worked. Dawn broke in glory on Quin's face. It was just as if the sun had lifted its upper limb out of the darkness and shot gleaming spokes into the zenith flecked here and there with faint fleeces of shining rose, the harbingers of glorious day.

"Yes, I've got it, I've got it!" said the enthusiastic second mate. "Oh, it's a heavenly plan, sir, and it's the only plan! I see that now. There isn't any other way to do it—oh, there isn't any other way to do it!"

"Well, what is it?" asked the skipper. "Come, out with it! Don't keep us up here, you know."

"Yes, what is it?" said Mr. Sadler. "Let's hear it."

"Oh, it's a most gorgeous plan," said Quin, with an air of self-gratulation, which almost shone like a halo.

And then again the sun's upper limb seemed a little clouded. A flicker of doubt passed across Mr. Quin's boyish and charming face. He said:—

"Yes, it's all right—if it works."

"Oh, if it works?" said the skipper. "After all my cigarettes you tell me you've got a gorgeous plan if it works! If I had a pinch of salt I suppose I might drop it on the tiger's tail and see if that worked. Oh, you do disappoint me."

And once again the second mate's face lighted up. The sun seemed to rise clear of all obstacles. He opened his eyes wide, and said:—

"Yes, sir; with a spreader it *would* work."

"With a what?" asked the sceptical skipper.

"Why, with a spreader, of course, sir," said the second mate.

"And what would work with a spreader?" asked the captain.

"Why, what I've been tellin' you, sir," said Quin, who had really been thinking so hard that he had come to the conclusion that they had heard the wheels working. But the skipper retorted on him:—

"Well, I ain't able to look into your dark mind, Mr. Quin. All that you've let on is that it would work with a spreader. What would work with a spreader?"

"Why, a runnin' bowline, sir," said Mr. Quin, "stopped with yarn and opened out with a sheer-pole, say."

"And are you goin' on deck with that fakement to put it over the tiger's neck?" roared Captain Cradgett. "Oh, do go! You and your plan and your spreader!"

"I don't mean to go down with it, sir," said Quin. "You quite mistake me. What I'm goin' to do is to fake up this gadgett and lower it down on deck, and wait till he walks through it."

The skipper rubbed his nose, and looked down at his subordinate as if he were a promising candidate for an idiot asylum.

"Ah," said Captain Cradgett, "I see. And we're to wait up here on this fore-yard till he walks through it! Well, Mr. Sadler, what do you think of Mr. Quin's plan?"

"I think it's dull," said Mr. Sadler, gloomily, "and not at all excitin'."

And he turned to the second mate.

"Besides, Mr. Quin, suppose he does walk through it; what are we to do then?"

"Why," said Mr. Quin, "don't you see? As soon as he steps inside we must haul it as hard as we can, break away the stop, and the bowline will catch him round the middle, and we shall have him right and tight and handy."

But the skipper shook his head. So did Mr. Sadler. And a deep silence fell on them for quite a little while. Then Captain Cradgett spoke.

"Well, I suppose it's better than nothin'," he said, grudgingly, "but we'll look pretty fools all the same up aloft here holdin' on to a large and powerful tiger middled, so to speak, by a runnin' bowline. Why, he'll fairly scoot away with us."

"Oh, no, he won't," said Mr. Quin; "I've thought of all that. If we catch a turn or a couple of turns round the mast we'll hold him, and every time he jumps we'll haul in some of the slack."

"By Jove!" said the skipper. "I begin to think, if he only walks through it, the thing might work."

"I'm sure of it," said Quin, joyfully. "And you'll see, sir, when we have hold of him he'll be very angry and jump and jump, and every time he does we'll haul in a bit more of the slack. And presently he'll be hoisted up in the middle, standing on his toes, and any of us can go down and do just what we like with him."

"Yes, you can go down and do what you like with him," said the skipper, with bitter generosity.

"Yes, and so you can for me," said Mr. Sadler, darkly.

"He'll be quite safe," said Mr. Quin; "perfectly safe!"

"I'm glad of that, on your account," said the skipper. "But what'll you do when you do go down?"

"Well, sir, we'll hoist him up, and some of us could just entice him, so to speak, towards his cage," said Quin.

"Yes, yes, you can entice him," said the skipper; "or Mr. Sadler can entice him."

"Don't ask me to," said the chief mate, firmly, "because I won't. I wouldn't for an admiral."

"And if that doesn't work," said the second mate, "we could turn the cage on its side and hoist him up and lower him into it."

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Sadler, in a deep tone of despair; "and I see you gettin' him into the cage somewhere about this time two months. And I see the crowd comin' out to help you do it! Oh, no, I don't think anythin' of your plan, Mr. Quin."

Mr. Quin then alleged that he had a subsidiary plan, which was to drop a piece of beef into the cage. Then the tiger would follow the beef.

"Well, well," said the skipper, impatiently, "we can't stay here for a month of Sundays lookin' like three joskins! Now, now, come now, Mr. Quin, what are you goin' to do all this with?"

"I think that topsail brace will do the trick all right," said Quin.

"Very well, try it," said the skipper.

And Quin called to Ryan, up aloft in the main cross-trees.

"Here, Ryan, just cut adrift both parts of the port topsail brace under your foot."

And Ryan cut it adrift. Quin went up aloft on the fore-topsail yard and, hauling up the brace pendant, laid hold of the brace and unrove it. And presently, with it coiled over his shoulder, he came down on the fore-yard.

He also brought the brace block and pendant which he had cut away at the yard-arm.

"Here we are," said Mr. Quin, proudly. "I really do believe it'll work."

And then he looked at the derrick triced to the mast and sighed.

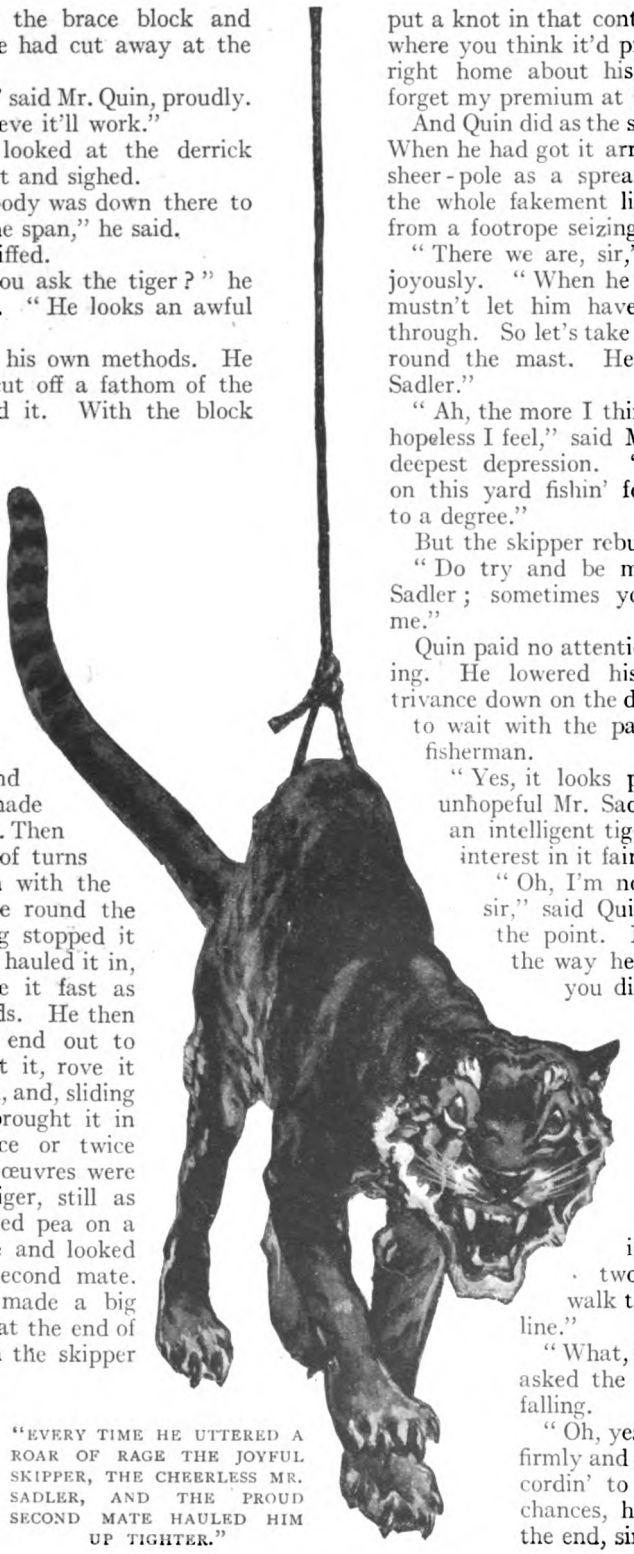
"I wish somebody was down there to lower away on the span," he said.

The skipper sniffed.

"Why don't you ask the tiger?" he asked, satirically. "He looks an awful obligin' beast."

But Quin had his own methods. He and Mr. Sadler cut off a fathom of the brace and unlaid it. With the block and brace pendant Quin climbed out on the gaff of the boom-foresail. When he was up at the peak, with his arm round the halliards, he lashed the brace block there, having wound the pendant round and round and made it thoroughly fast. Then he took a couple of turns and a half hitch with the end of the brace round the peak and, having stopped it there, Mr. Sadler hauled it in, cut it, and made it fast as preventer halliards. He then slung the fresh end out to Quin, who caught it, rove it through his block, and, sliding down the gaff, brought it in with him. Once or twice while these manœuvres were going on, the tiger, still as lively as a parched pea on a hot shovel, came and looked eagerly at the second mate. But now Quin made a big running bowline at the end of the brace. Then the skipper interfered.

"Look here, Mr. Quin, don't forget we mustn't cut the tiger in two. Just you put a knot in that contraption of yours where you think it'd prevent it running right home about his middle. Don't forget my premium at Calcutta."



"EVERY TIME HE UTTERED A ROAR OF RAGE THE JOYFUL SKIPPER, THE CHEERLESS MR. SADLER, AND THE PROUD SECOND MATE HAULED HIM UP TIGHTER."

And Quin did as the skipper suggested. When he had got it arranged he used a sheer-pole as a spreader and stopped the whole fakement lightly with yarns from a footrope seizing.

"There we are, sir," said Mr. Quin, joyously. "When he gets inside it we mustn't let him have time to jump through. So let's take a couple of turns round the mast. Here you are, Mr. Sadler."

"Ah, the more I think of it the more hopeless I feel," said Mr. Sadler, in the deepest depression. "To sit up here on this yard fishin' for a tiger is dull to a degree."

But the skipper rebuked him.

"Do try and be more hopeful, Mr. Sadler; sometimes you quite depress me."

Quin paid no attention to this bickering. He lowered his ingenious contrivance down on the deck and prepared to wait with the patience of a pier fisherman.

"Yes, it looks pretty," said the unhopeful Mr. Sadler. "But why an intelligent tiger should take an interest in it fairly beats me."

"Oh, I'm not sayin' he will, sir," said Quin. "That's not the point. But just look at the way he goes about. If you didn't know better, what with the quickness of him you'd think there were several tigers. Now, accordin' to the doctrine of chances, it's long odds that inside of a day or two he'll be sure to walk through that bowline."

"What, in a day or two?" asked the skipper, his jaw falling.

"Oh, yes, sir," said Quin, firmly and cheerfully. "Accordin' to the doctrine of chances, he must do it in the end, sir."

"I think very little of you and your doctrine of chances," said the skipper, for the first time showing real depression.

But just then the tiger brushed the noose as he went for'ard again. He sniffed the galley, inside of which was the trembling cook, and presently bounded on the fo'c'sle head, where he inspected the anchors with much more than the interest of a Lloyd's surveyor. Then once more he returned to the bridge-house. He looked long and eagerly at the three men on the fore-yard, and then, going on the fidley, burnt his nose against the funnel, and spat like an outraged cat.

"I didn't like the way he looked at us," said the skipper. "I didn't like it at all."

"Yes, but he must come here, sir, if we're to catch him," said Mr. Quin. "I've a good mind to go a little farther down, just to entice him. Or perhaps Mr. Sadler would."

"You're quite wrong, Mr. Quin," grunted the chief mate. "The Mr. Sadler you refer to wouldn't go down a foot farther for five pounds. So there you have it."

"Well, I've got another plan," continued the ingenious second mate. "I was thinkin' of gettin' another line and heavin' it down to Mr. MacIntosh for him to put a piece of beef on it out of the store, and then we could haul it up and dangle it round about the noose. That'd fetch him, sir; don't you think so?"

But the skipper shook his head.

"You are an ingenious young man," said Captain Cradgett, "but you don't see the bearin's of all your infernal notions. Just suppose you held a piece of beef down there, and just suppose he got it, what do you suppose he'd do?"

"Well, I suppose he'd eat it, sir," said the second mate.

"Well, yes," said the skipper, tartly, "that's what I suppose, and then I suppose he'd be quite happy, and I suppose he'd go to sleep for twenty-four hours; and I also suppose, Mr. Quin, that we'd be up here all the time. I don't like all these suppositions; I don't like 'em in the least."

But just at that moment Mr. Sadler gave a terrific yell, and bellowed:—

"Haul away! Haul away! Haul away!"

"My gosh, we've got him!" roared the skipper.

"Oh, my plan's a wonder," said Mr. Quin, as he hauled with the others, and very nearly fell from aloft.

His plan had been successful. Down below the tiger now went through a series of gymnastic evolutions which were most surprising. But every time he uttered a roar of rage or spat like a cat or gave a jump and tried to

tie a knot in himself, the joyful skipper, the cheerless Mr. Sadler, and the proud second mate hauled him up tighter. Presently his back assumed the form of a Norman arch, while he scratched viciously at the deck with what the skipper called his fore-and-aft claws. Each time he turned round to lay hold of the rope that had him in a clinch he was hoisted a little higher.

"Handsomely! we mustn't hoist him up too much," said the skipper. "I think the brace is all right, but you never know. We don't want to put too much strain on it. But he looks pretty helpless now, Mr. Quin, don't he? Oh, he's losin' ground every jump."

"Yes, sir, so he is," said Mr. Quin. "My plan just works like machinery."

"Yes, it's almost excitin'," said Mr. Sadler, slowly. "Oh, it's really almost excitin'. But what are we goin' to do now?"

"Ah," said the skipper, "the thing now is to get him back into the cage."

"Well, it ain't far from him," said Mr. Sadler. "It's fairly handy. Gettin' him in will be quite another matter. We may be here for months with him dancin' about there and us tryin' to get him in, and all, all in vain."

"Come, do dry up, Mr. Sadler," said the skipper, with sudden wrath. "You can't keep cheerful for a minute. I never met such a man. What shall we do now, Mr. Quin?"

"Well, sir, what I was thinkin' of," replied Mr. Quin, "was that one of us could get a piece of beef and put it in the cage. And we could rig up a fakement so that when the tiger got into the cage we could close the door from up aloft and shoot the bolts again."

"Yes," said Mr. Sadler, "that sounds all right. But it won't work—I know it won't."

"I don't see why not," said the skipper. "Now, Mr. Sadler, Mr. Quin's done a whole lot. Don't you think you could go down and get the beef and fix things up?"

Mr. Sadler shook his head.

"No, Captain Cradgett, I don't think I could. I don't in the least think I could. And what's more, I don't mind sayin' that I won't."

"Oh, but you've got to if I tell you to," said the skipper.

"Not at all, sir," said Mr. Sadler. "I always try to do my duty, but I never shipped to go halves in the deck with a tiger, and I can't do it, sir. Why don't you try somebody else? There's Ryan up there; let him do it."

"Very well, we'll try it on Ryan," said the skipper. "Here, Ryan," he called out, "now the tiger's quite safe we want you, or one of you, to go with the cook and get out a quarter of beef and put it in the cage."

"Oh, do you, sir?" said Ryan, sitting very tight on the main cross-trees. "But beggin' your pardon, sir, I wouldn't go down there with a tiger tied up with a piece of string for the whole vally of the ship and the cargo. Nor my mate 'ere wouldn't, neither. Not 'im!"

And the skipper turned to Mr. Sadler and Mr. Quin.

"You see, if those curs won't do it," he said, "I don't see how I'm to make 'em. So it's up to one of you two to do it."

"Why, yes," said Mr. Sadler, who seemed to be thinking hard. "If Mr. Quin won't I suppose it's up to me."

"Yes, I think it's up to you now," said Quin. "I've done almost enough."

"There, you see, it's up to you, Mr. Sadler," said the skipper, with a certain uneasiness which both Quin and Sadler understood.

"Yes," said Sadler, very thoughtfully, "accordin' to sea custom, if the second mate won't do a thing the mate's got to. Such as goin' aloft in bad weather and the like, doin' desperate things and the like. But what's the sea custom, Captain Cradgett, if the mate won't go aloft or the crowd won't follow him if he does? What's the custom then? Why, the captain has to go, to be sure."

And the skipper visibly altered colour.

"Come, you mustn't talk like that," he said, hastily; "it's ridiculous. Remember the difference in our positions. I'm gettin' an old man, and besides, Mr. Sadler, I'm fat. As you know, the tiger never saw me without gettin' excited. But I've seen you, Mr. Sadler, stand by his cage for half an hour without him as much as lookin' at you. Why, you might have been a bone a month old for all the interest he took in you."

It is quite true that the chief mate was rather thin and bony.

"Well, I may be thin," he said, almost through his teeth, "but I'm not goin' to rely on him takin' no interest in me. I do wish you'd never brought him, sir."

"So do I," said the skipper. "But what's the good of talkin' about that now? We've got him, haven't we?"

"I think he's still got us," sighed Mr. Sadler. "I vote we put him overboard without projectin' with him any more. Look there, there's Great Nicobar. We've got no use for it, but he has. What's the good of land if it isn't for him to swim to?

That's my plan. You saw just now how he stood up, put his paws on the rail and looked at it, and sniffed and sniffed and sniffed as if he smelt home. Yes, I vote we sling him overboard. What do you say, Mr. Quin?"

"It isn't at all such a bad idea," said the second mate. "We could hoist him up, and I could rig a whip out to the yard-arm there and make it fast on that tiger's tackle and swing him outboard, and then we could cut him adrift."

"Well, I really do think it's best to put him overboard," said the skipper, reluctantly.

If Quin had suggested that they should not do this Mr. Sadler would have probably urged it as the only resource left to them. But now he was once more full of the mournfullest doubts.

"It's all very well," he said; "but suppose we swing him up and suppose the rope parts, we'll all be in the same old trouble."

"Yes, yes, but somethin' must be done," said the skipper, desperately. "I'm gettin' that hungry and thirsty and stiff I don't know what to do. And losin' my premium too! But we must run some risk; what do you say, Mr. Quin?"

"Yes, sir, I suppose we must," said the second mate, who thought he had run about as much risk as anybody.

"Well, then, get to work and rig that whip," said the skipper, crossly. "Here, Mr. Sadler, that's somethin' you can do."

And presently they got the whip rigged at the yard-arm, and Quin swarmed out again to the peak of the gaff and took a rolling hitch with the hauling part round the brace as far down as he could reach. Then he clapped a stopper on the peak tackle, cleared the fall, and ent the end of it down on deck. Then once more it was a question as to who should go down and take the other fall to the winch.

"Come, Mr. Sadler," said the skipper, "I maintain it's your turn now."

"Oh, no," said Mr. Sadler, "not at all. Don't you worry about me."

"You're a coward, Mr. Sadler," said the skipper, angrily.

"Yes," said Mr. Sadler, very firmly, "where there's a tiger about I am a coward. I own it freely, and I don't care who knows it—man, woman, or child."

"Mr. Quin, I suppose we mustn't ask him," said the captain. "Poor Mr. Sadler's tremblin' like a leaf. I suppose you, and perhaps Ryan, might go down on deck, now he's quite safe, and take the end to the winch."

"Yes, but supposin' the rope breaks while we're hoistin' him," said Mr. Quin. "Where'll I and Ryan be then?"

Ryan interfered from the main cross-trees.

"Don't you trouble about me, Mr. Quin," said that able-bodied seaman; "I sha'n't be there."

"Oh, very well, you're a coward too, are you?" said the skipper. "But I've got a plan. We must have you safe, Mr. Quin, whatever happens. Look here, let's have another line up here and send us up a single block. We'll rig a whip to put round your waist, and Mr. Sadler and I will stand by it. If the rope breaks before he's over the side we'll run you up out of his way quick, d'ye see?"

"Yes, that's a very good notion," said Mr. Sadler; "a very good notion. I wouldn't like you to be hurt, Quin, I really wouldn't. It would make me very much depressed."

"Then I sincerely hope nothin' will happen to Mr. Quin," said the skipper; "for if you're more depressed than usual, Mr. Sadler, the only way to save me from cuttin' my throat will be for you to cut yours."

And when this plan was all arranged and the skipper and mate stood by the fall, the second mate went down to the winch.

"Mind you don't lose any time hoistin' me," said Quin, as he went down.

"You rely on us," said the skipper, cheerfully. "We'll do our very best for you."

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Sadler, sombrely, "we'll do our best, Quin; but in case of accidents, have you any messages for home?"

"Dry up, Mr. Sadler, do dry up," said the skipper. "I never saw such a man as you, Mr. Sadler. Come now, lay hold there, and the moment there's the faintest sign of the yard-arm whip partin' hoist away quick."

And presently Mr. Quin had the winch going with plenty of turns round the barrel. He worked it very slowly, and gradually made a Gothic arch of the tiger, who uttered the most extraordinary noises and clawed the air viciously. The skipper was most excited and Mr. Sadler sighed audibly.

"Oh, by thunder, it works!" said the skipper. "My plan works!"

"Yes, it does almost seem to work," said Mr. Sadler, lugubriously.

"Heave away handsomely, very slow," said the skipper. "Don't take any risks, Mr. Quin."

Quin felt he was taking a great many, and thought it was about time somebody helped him. He stopped the winch and called to Ryan.

"Look here, Ryan, I wish you'd come down

here. Don't be a coward, man ; I want you to slack away on the main purchase as I heave in on the yard-arm whip."

And to this appeal Ryan succumbed.

" I never shipped to do it, sir, and I don't like to," said Ryan ; " but you bein' there, I'll come if I perish, for I feels I must."

So presently, as Quin went slow with his winch, Ryan slacked away on the barrel of the other, after the mate aloft had cast off the stopper on the peak purchase.

" Oh, things are goin' splendidly," said the skipper, " splendidly."

And just at that moment Sadler, who was above him, slipped and knocked the skipper off his perch. The two of them having hold of the fall of the whip attached to Mr. Quin, completely overbalanced the whole arrangement. With the rope running easy in the block they hoisted Quin nearly up to the foreyard, while they went down on deck quite close to the furious and enraged tiger. As they descended the noise the tiger made was more than equalled by the roars of the skipper and his mate. As Quin had been forcibly hauled from the winch, Ryan made a dash and saw to it that the tiger was still held taut. He got hold of the whip-fall while he still held on to his own. But that, of course, the skipper and Mr. Sadler could not know in the hurry of their descent. No sooner had they reached the deck load than they both let go of the fall and bolted for the fore rigging, while poor Quin came down with a crash on top of Ryan, and knocked him as flat as a jib-down-haul. In the meantime an extraordinarily active skipper and a still more active mate were struggling wildly for precedence on the starboard fore-shrouds, a precedence which was gained in the most insubordinate manner by the chief mate. And now Quin, rendered desperate by this emergency, reckoned he'd chance things and work more quickly. He set the winch going, and the tiger rose smartly, as Ryan slacked away on the old fore-topsail brace. The animal made one desperate attempt to claw the rail, but was finally swung over the side, and no sooner was he above the Indian Ocean than the rope of the yard-arm tackle parted, and he went into the water with a terrific roar. The mate, the skipper, Quin, and the courageous Ryan uttered yells of triumph, and no sooner had they shouted, " He's overboard, he's overboard ! " than the rest of the crew emerged cautiously from their quarters and presently lined the port side of the *Star of the East*. Then the captain and Mr. Sadler came down from aloft slowly.

" Can I help you at all, sir ? I should be glad to help you if I could, sir," said the chief mate, anxiously, to his superior.

" Not the way you did just now, by climbing over me," said the skipper, angrily, " puttin' those boots of yours in my neck. I never believed you were such an active man, Mr. Sadler, and I hope I'll never have the chance to prove it again. And you that knocked me over, too ! "

It was certain now that the tiger not only smelt land but saw it. By the way he swam towards Great Nicobar it looked as if he was glad to get rid of the *Star of the East*.

" Ah ! " said the skipper, thoughtfully ; " a tiger in the Nicobar Islands, especially a clouded Manchurian tiger, will be a great surprise to the naturalists, and also to the natives. They're a measly lot, a very measly lot. Twenty-five years ago I was in Nancowry Harbour in an old wind-jammer. It's a fine harbour, Mr. Sadler, but I have a very poor opinion of the inhabitants, and a few of them will never be missed. Nor would most of the crowd here but Mr. Quin and Ryan."

And then he turned viciously to the chief engineer.

" I'm sorry, Mr. MacIntosh, that you were in a safe place," said the skipper, " and if I could I'd dock the premium I've lost out of your money. It was up to you to look after that cage, and you didn't do it. I've a very poor opinion of you, Mr. MacIntosh ; but there, get her goin' again. We don't want to be lolloppin' round Great Nicobar all day."

Having freed his mind, he retired with dignity. Sadler turned to the second mate, and said, darkly :—

" You mark me, Mr. Quin, if you want those cigarettes you'd better go and ask for 'em, and wait till he hands 'em out. I oughtn't to say it, but he's mean to a degree. Did you notice up aloft how he kept on sayin', ' My plan, my plan, my plan ' ? "

" Yes, sir, I noticed it," said Mr. Quin.

" When it was mostly mine," said Mr. Sadler, with an air of depression that might have sent the glass down an inch. " But there, you never get credit for anythin' at sea. And, oh, it's mostly so very dull ! "

" But surely it hasn't been dull to-day, sir ? " asked Mr. Quin, as he wiped his heated brow.

The chief mate rubbed his chin.

" Well, no," he said, sadly, " I suppose you couldn't call it exactly dull. But it's mostly dull, very dull indeed. I'd much rather drive a bus up and down the Whitechapel Road."

CABINET MINISTERS:

Their Human Side.

I.

DAVID LLOYD GEORGE.

IN all his ways Mr. Lloyd George is very human. Success has not spoilt his love of home life, his affection for the simple pleasures of his early youth, or that happy temperament which leads him to revel in the humours of everyday life and enables him to keep so astonishingly young in character in spite of the cares and worries of his responsible office.

The subject of this sketch is one of the most charming of companions. His real charm, which makes him so popular among those who really know him, arises from the fact that, however busy or careworn he may be, he is always very much the same. He is a man of exceptionally high spirits and cheery optimism; always bright and interesting, and always full of fun. He loves a good humorous story, and is always glad to hear a new one. At the same time he will listen with patience to an old "chestnut," and even if he has heard the anecdote before he seldom says so.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE IS DEVOTED TO GOLF, AND DURING RECENT YEARS HAS BECOME QUITE A GOOD PLAYER.

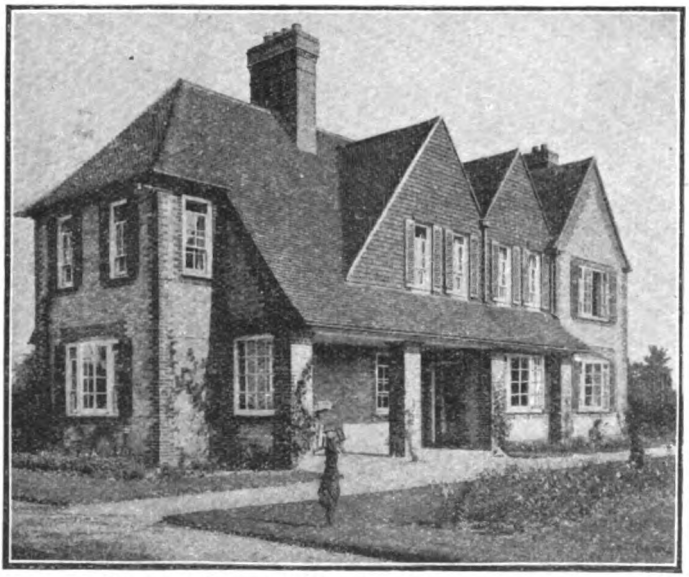
Photo. Sport & General.

I have often noticed that if any young or unknown person tells a story, however lame it may be and however poorly it may be told, Mr. Lloyd George always endeavours to cover up the poor speaker's confusion and re-establish his confidence.

His well-known love of a good story leads me to speak of one of his most delightful habits of friendship. He has a knack of storing up anecdotes and little pieces of interesting information for the next meeting with yourself. He has a wonderful memory, and can usually recall, with great accuracy, the most trivial conversations and incidents months, and sometimes years, after they have taken place. If you remind him of a previous conversation, during which he made a certain statement, he is always apt with a retort. He not only remembers what he said and what you said, but also what other persons present said, and how they looked and how you looked.

His varied knowledge is really remarkable.

He likes best to talk about politics, but he will take an interest in almost any topic. This is, no doubt, due to the fact that he is an omnivorous reader of the newspapers. Very little escapes him, from foreign news to breach of promise cases. If a great Nonconformist congress is being held he knows all about the speeches, and can tell you the best points made by each speaker. And it is the same with any other prominent happening. He has read all about it, and can discuss the subject in almost any company.



MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S HOUSE AT WALTON HEATH.

Being by profession a solicitor, it is scarcely surprising to learn that Mr. Lloyd George takes a keen interest in criminal cases. He will follow the evidence of a big murder trial very closely, and will afterwards describe to you, in course of conversation, what questions he would have put to the witnesses and what verdict he would have given if he had been on the jury.

I once asked him, "Were you fond of the law?" "I was fond of advocacy," he replied, "and, on the whole, the six years during which I practised were very happy, although," he said, reflectively, "I do not know whether I should care to resume my professional labours. I had one serious drawback—I never sent in any bills of costs. The result was I never had any money. But when my brother joined me in practice things improved in that respect. I must confess, however, that I hated the office work." I suggested that he might have been a great success at the Bar. "Well," he said, "perhaps I might, but one never knows."

Referring again to what Mr. Lloyd George reads, it is an astonishing fact that, notwithstanding his numerous occupations, he finds time to peruse a good many books. He loves historical novels, and would have made an ideal reviewer, for he possesses the art of picking out the real point in a book, and it is seldom that he reads anything without making some pregnant and sagacious observation upon it.

Of course, there are some fields of activity of which Mr. Lloyd George is completely ignorant. His education in horse-racing, for instance, has been neglected. And he does not take much interest in cricket or English football. But he is a great philosopher and has carefully thought out most of the problems of life.

HIS WELSH HOME AT CRICCIETH.
Photo. E. H. Mills.

He places courage above all other virtues, and sometimes he says that patience is the highest form of courage.

The fact that he is always observing and always ready to adopt improvements is undoubtedly the reason why intellectually he improves every year. He likes trying experiments, and the following anecdote provides an illustration of his thoroughness in this direction.

Some time ago a friend had been descanting to him upon the enormous quantity of margarine which is consumed. A few weeks afterwards the following conversation took place:—

Mr. Lloyd George: "I sent for some of your margarine the other day."

The Friend: "How did you like it?"

Mr. Lloyd George: "Well, it seemed all right, but somehow I did not feel that I was doing the right thing."

The Friend: "I suppose you thought you were robbing the poor cow of her living?"

MR. AND MRS. LLOYD GEORGE AND THEIR DAUGHTER MEGAN.
Photo. E. H. Mills.

Mr. Lloyd George: "Yes. Having been brought up in the country I regard the cow as a sacred animal."

A man of extremely simple tastes, Mr. Lloyd George likes very plain food, and has really only one extravagance—he loves a good cigar. I have frequently heard him say, "I was at a big dinner the other night; no end of courses. I did wish it was all over, and looked forward to my cigar." In his own house he is one of the most domesticated of men. But there is one task he does not like, and that is carving. Mrs Lloyd George usually carves, and when she is away her husband's performances with

the carving-knife are the subject of much amusement in the family circle. No one, however, enjoys the fun more than Mr. Lloyd George himself. Incidentally, I might mention that on Sunday afternoons he always has a special dish—an apple pasty or turnover—prepared for his tea.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S TWO SOLDIER SONS.
Photo. Central Press.

Possessing the Welshman's natural love of music, Mr. Lloyd George rarely misses an opportunity of going to hear an oratorio. He is also fond of the opera, but nothing seems to please him better than to spend an hour singing Welsh hymns, accompanied by his daughter Olwen on the piano, he being an enthusiast in regard to singing Welsh hymns. When he has finished one of his favourites he will usually say, "That is a splendid old hymn; now let us have so-and-so." Furthermore, everyone present must join in the hymn, and those who cannot sing Welsh have to do their best in a foreign language. Mr Lloyd George will, however, sometimes make a concession and sing a hymn in English for the benefit of the uninitiated.

Theatricals, however, as well as music, greatly interest him, for he himself is a born actor and mimic. When he returned from his recent trip to Wales he gave a most graphic description of the manner in which the various types of soldiers—the collier, farm labourer, mechanic, shop assistant, etc.—marched, finishing up, however, with the appropriate observation:—

"But they will all bayonet the Germans in the same way. They are all actuated by the same marvellous spirit."

It was on this particular occasion that he also described the dinner of the Welsh Fusiliers which he attended, and the ceremony of eating the leek, which every officer must perform when he joins the regiment. He related how at the dinner in question the youngest recruit was a distinguished soldier, who had been placed high in command, and said that the manner in which this particular officer spoke, and obeyed the regimental custom, was one of the most impressive things he had ever seen.

MISS LLOYD GEORGE HELPING IN THE GOOD CAUSE ON RUSSIAN FLAG DAY.
Photopress.

"He made me feel," said Mr. Lloyd George,

" as if I were attending some great religious ceremony. There was nothing comical or farcical about the incident."

Then, in a few picturesque sentences, he forthw th gave some extracts from the officer's speech. If the original was as effective as the repetition it must have been a wonderful performance.

I have said that in all his ways Mr. Lloyd George is very human. I might add, he is thoughtfully human. To give a little example. Hearing Mrs. Lloyd George telephoning for one of the maids to go from Downing Street to Walton Heath, he at once said :—

" I should let her stay at Downing Street to-night. This is the girl's night off. I expect she will want to meet her sweetheart. It would be a pity to disappoint them."

Mr. Lloyd George is always glad to render a service to an old friend. Notwithstanding his great success, he has changed very little in his manner or his friendships. He is just the same unassuming person that he was when he lived at his little house on Wandsworth Common.

He is very fond of dogs, and takes the keenest interest in their doings. When he started from Walton Heath to attend the recent conference in Paris he took with him his daughter Megan's dog, a venerable pug of diplomatic habits, no doubt due to long residence in the neighbourhood of the Foreign Office. When at home, Mr. Lloyd George usually sits with one of the dogs curled up on his lap.

As the majority of people are aware, the right honourable gentleman is devoted to golf, and Saturday usually finds him at Walton Heath, for he rarely plays on any other day. He has greatly improved in his game during recent years, and has become quite a good player. When he has had a hard night at the House of Commons nothing pleases him more than to hole a short putt at the first hole, a feat which he accomplished on the morning after his memorable Budget speech in 1909.

Owing to his shortness in stature, many people think that he is a small man and lacking in physical power. This, however, is quite a mistake. The truth is that Mr. Lloyd George, who weighs thirteen and a half stone, is a very sturdy, powerful person, with a wonderful physique and nervous system. Were it not so he could scarcely have endured so successfully the strenuous and exciting political events in which he has figured during the last few years.

He has a wonderful gift of sleep. When he is tired out he will go into a room, lock the door, lie down, pull a shawl over himself, and go to sleep for half an hour. When he awakes he is as fresh as a new pin.

From the nature of things, all politicians are open to the charge of inconsistency, but Mr. Lloyd George has never wavered in the two main principles of his life—one, the hatred of tyranny and oppression, and the other the desire to improve the condition of the poor. Indeed, he regards the remark made in the House one night by Mr. Bonar Law, who, speaking of his *confrère*, referred to him as " the little brother of the poor," as one of the greatest compliments which have ever been paid him. A friend said to him once, " If I had to write your epitaph I should say: 'Sacred to the memory of David Lloyd George. He was the poor man's friend.' " To this he smiled and replied, " You had better say he tried to be." No man can do more, and it is certain that no truer democrat, no more genuine champion of the working classes has ever occupied a seat in the British Cabinet.

Recently Mr. Lloyd George has occupied the pleasing but dangerous position mentioned in the Scriptures—a position which, we are told on the same high authority, is specially dangerous for a prophet. All men have been speaking well of him. The critics have been distinguished by their absence. However, his friends have now been reassured ; he has been saved by the drink question from the fate of the false prophets of old.

[*Other articles in this series will follow in due course.*]

Eye-Witness in London

Un-Censored Communiqués

This Morning, in the Bond St Region

We Display a Marked Superiority

(Intercepting Supplies)

Towards the City — Some of Our Patrols attempting a Capture, were met by a Spirited Resistance . . .

On the Line Regent St. — Oxford St.
SALE
TO-DAY ONLY
We delivered an Assault by Force on an Important Position
Capturing Large Quantities of Material

This afternoon, on the Kensington—Bayswater line,
Our Troops have made Distinct Advances.
From the Mayfair Sector an attempted
Enveloping Movement is Reported.

SAM BRIGGS BECOMES A SOLDIER.

VII.—In the Nick of Time.

By RICHARD MARSH.

Illustrated by Charles Pears.

"THE great game of war." I remember reading that somewhere soon after I had joined the forces, and at the time I was a bit puzzled as to what it meant, but by degrees I understood better. In a sense war is a game—so to speak, a game and a half; but I never did think that part of it was being blown through the air in a tree. If it comes to that, no one else did either. When I rolled over the edge of the trench, first of all they thought I was dead; then they thought I was dying; when they found that I wasn't even that, nothing seemed to be able to stop their asking questions. That's the impression left on my mind; although I refused to answer them they kept on asking. I simply went to sleep. They didn't go so far as to refuse to let me do that, because, I suppose, they saw I couldn't help it.

When at last I did wake up, it was a long while before I could make out where I was. I was on a heap of straw; in front was a rickety wooden table; some stools were round it, made out of empty wooden boxes, which didn't look too safe or comfortable either. Several people were present—too many for the stools, and likewise for the table; most of them seemed to be looking at me.

The first thing I remember was a voice saying:—

"All right now, eh?"

I did my best to scramble up to a sitting position. I didn't know who was speaking, though I did my best to answer him. But I could have screamed if I had had breath enough to do it with, the beans it gave me!

"Beg pardon, sir—can't quite say." That, at first, was all the answer I could find.

He seemed to be satisfied, which was more than I was.

"Well, Sergeant Briggs, I congratulate you on being able to say as much as that."

"Thank you, sir." I didn't know what I was thanking him for. The fact is, I was such a wreck—afraid to touch myself, I was so sore and aching. I didn't know anything; certainly not where I was or who was there. Then all at once a voice spoke which I did recognize.

"Well, Sergeant Briggs, I'm glad to hear the doctor congratulate you, because that means that matters are not by a long way so bad as they might be, and I understand that you've been engaged in operations from which your escape seems a miracle. What is it, Sergeant Briggs, that you have been doing?"

"Haven't been doing anything, sir." The sound of Colonel Stanway's voice so took me by surprise that I still didn't know what I was saying. I had a sort of notion that my reply amused him.

"You haven't, haven't you? What's this I hear about the blowing up of a battery? What do you know about that?"

"Nothing, sir."

"Is that so? Don't you trouble about standing up; I see you're a bit shaky on your legs. You had nothing to do with blowing it up? Take your time, my lad; I wouldn't worry you with questions if it weren't absolutely necessary that we should have some idea of what has happened, so that we may make preparations for what is likely to follow. You appear to be the only man available to give it. What has become of your companions? You were in the command of Captain Newstead?"

I looked at him as straight in the face as I could, which is not saying much; but though I had a sort of feeling that before long I should be able to stand up, I couldn't get as far as that just then; I was sitting kind of bunched

up on top of the heap of straw, on which it seemed I had been to sleep. When he asked me that question, it seems silly, but I had to make an effort to clear my mind before I was able to make an answer of any sort—then it was a queer one.

"I believe he was, sir. I remember his saying—I don't quite remember what he said, but I know what stuck in my head—that he said 'We can't get back.'"

"'We can't get back'? Captain Newstead said that? Then what happened? Was Captain Newstead wounded?"

"I don't know what happened, sir; I don't think anyone was wounded."

"No one was wounded? You mean that the explosion came too soon? Try to think. How did that happen? Did they blow the place up, or did you?"

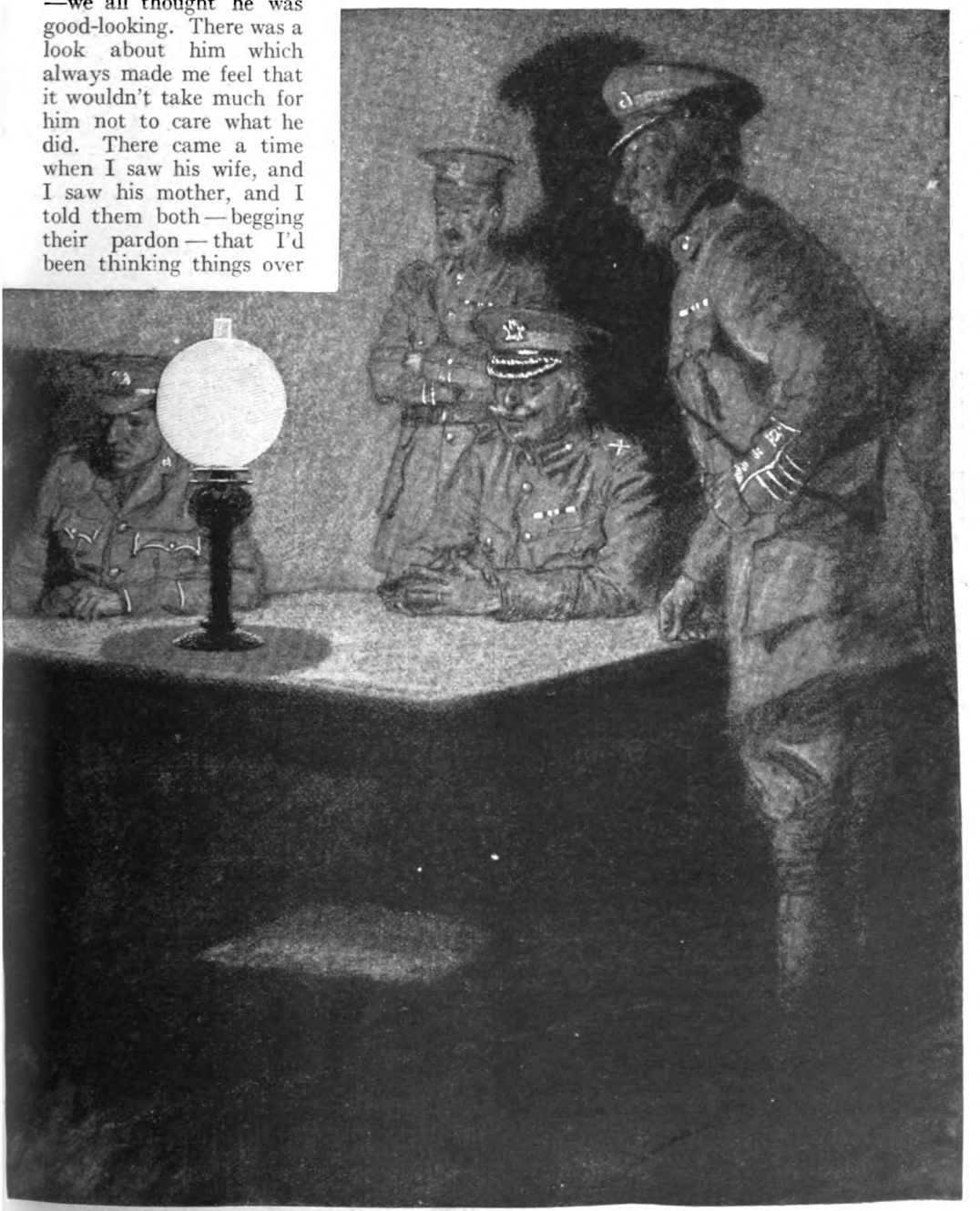
It came to me in a flash; something in his words seemed to lift a veil. I sort of looked up and I saw Ormiston with those two balls in his hands. I tried to explain, but just at that moment it wasn't easy.

"Ormiston had a ball in either hand. He picked them up off a shelf—two Germans tried to stop him, but they couldn't. He threw them—I think it must have been—into the magazine; but—that's all I remember."

That's all I ever have remembered—or ever shall. It is practically all that anyone has ever discovered. It was the beginning and the end of the story of the attack on the German battery. I don't want to use any tall talk, but there it is. It's as much as anyone has ever found out with certainty of the end of the English attacking and the Germans

"I DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING; CERTAINLY NOT WHERE I WAS OR WHO WAS

defending. I was all that was left of the lot—a miserable little under-sized chap like me! There were some fine fellows among them; Ormiston was over six foot, tall and straight, with a hooked nose like they give an eagle. Captain Newstead was almost as tall. Good-looking he was—we all thought he was good-looking. There was a look about him which always made me feel that it wouldn't take much for him not to care what he did. There came a time when I saw his wife, and I saw his mother, and I told them both—begging their pardon—that I'd been thinking things over a good deal since that night, and I had come to feel that if he had had his way his end was a good deal like what he would have had it be. He did a great thing that night, whether he quite meant to do it that way or not. Somehow I felt quite sure



THERE. THEN ALL AT ONCE A VOICE SPOKE WHICH I DID RECOGNIZE."

that he would have given his life with pleasure for a chance of doing it again.

"Then we are to understand that you're the sole survivor of Captain Newstead's entire company? I'm told that, so far as can be learnt, he had with him fifty-two men, including himself."

"That I can't tell you, sir."

"They've all gone, excepting you, and the battery is utterly destroyed."

"That again, sir, I cannot tell you."

"Well, I can tell you; scarcely even the ruins remain. I should imagine that the enemy could scarcely have suffered a severer blow. Captain Newstead acted throughout on his own responsibility. I doubt if I should have given my permission if it had been asked. The result is of a kind which makes it very difficult for me, in my position, to pass judgment. I believe, Sergeant, that the Brigadier here, General Loring, has a word to say."

Colonel Stanway was a biggish man, inclining to the heavy side. By him, at the table, on a box which looked as if it had held wine, was a shortish, sparely-built man—I shouldn't think he carried an ounce too much—with a short, grizzled moustache, and dark eyes which were set far back in his head. He spoke in a very quiet voice, which I liked the sound of.

"I don't know, Sergeant, that Colonel Stanway puts the case quite clearly, but since—if there was any acting without orders—there is nothing to show that you are to blame, I may tell you that you have had better luck than I have. You have been a soldier only a few months, I possibly as many years as you are old; but no chance has ever come my way to do what you did last night. There is reason to believe that the German authorities proposed to work wonders with their new battery, whose very existence had only been discovered by accident. I will be frank with you. You and your associates have destroyed, as it were in the course of an evening stroll, what quite possibly they will not be able to replace, and which, quite probably, might have caused us losses of which I do not care to think. I will say no more on that point at this moment, except that it is one of which you will certainly hear again. It is not to be supposed that the Germans will take what has happened to them lying down. It seems not unlikely that they will strain every nerve to win back what they have lost. We are in for some very warm fighting. Would you like to take your share of the fun, or go on sick leave, as you are perfectly entitled to do?"

It was a silly sort of question to ask, because, put that way, a chap with one leg wouldn't have hesitated what to answer. Within half an hour I was one of a party which was going up to survey what was left of the battery, though, mind you, I was really no more fit to do it than nothing at all.

There was the Brigadier and the whole of his staff, or pretty nearly the whole of his staff, anyway, and the C.O. and his lot, and goodness knows who else besides—I should think a hundred of us altogether. It seemed to me that there were too many. A pair of good glasses would have made us plain for miles; but, of course, it was no business of mine, and I will say this, that nothing happened to stop us—not at the beginning.

My wrist-watch had gone, vanished; I couldn't think where myself. I supposed I had dropped it, perched in that tree, coming through the air from the fort to the trench. So having no watch I couldn't tell what the time was, but I judged it to be between four and five. The sun, though overdue, hadn't appeared; the sky was covered with heavy grey clouds. There was a mist about which looked as if it might turn to rain. There was plenty of light for us to see, but it was quite easy to understand how we escaped notice from anyone at even a little distance who wanted to be disagreeable. At the start two chaps each lent me an arm to help me along, but I had rather hobble than stand that, and hobble I did. I didn't dare show what it cost to put a foot to the ground and get along, but if it hadn't been that I'd made up my mind I wouldn't be beat, before we had gone a dozen yards I could have lain down and cried.

It's a fact. But I didn't. Instead of giving in I got to the battery. They looked upon me as a sort of guide; it was as that they were taking me, because, if it came to taking, they were doing more of that than I was. We had the same experience as in the darkness; nothing was seen till we reached the top of the slope. Then, looking down, we saw that something beneath was smoking, here and there in actual flames. It was just as difficult as it had been overnight to make out just what was there and what was going on. The doctor, a party named McCann, who was a sportsman if ever there was one—as it seems to me doctors generally are—who had been called up to the trench on the telephone to see what was left of me, looked at what was smoking down below as if it was a joke.

"Suppose," he said, "there's still something down below there to blow up, and

chooses an awkward moment to do it. Hadn't inquiries better be made, General, before we go too far?"

"If you mean," said the Brigadier, "that I'm going to stop up here an indefinite time while you fellows go pottering about down there—no, thank you."

I don't pretend that that was exactly what he said, because I don't claim to state exactly what anyone said, and I don't want to run the risk of misreporting a Brigadier; but, anyhow, down the slope we all of us went together, so far as we could. I tell you I was surprised to find how steep it really was; the mystery was how none of us had broken our necks the night before. I had to take advantage of a helping arm more than once, or I should never have got down.

We were all halted at the bottom. The Brigadier, the C.O., and that lot had a sort of pow-wow. I noticed that the C.O. looked as if he had had about enough of it; he wasn't built for that sort of work, not at his time of life. He as good as owned it when he spoke to me, being even then a little short in the wind.

"I quite understand, Sergeant, what Captain Newstead meant when he said, as you tell us, that having once got down it was not easy to get back. It's a deuce of a climb up there."

As, turning, he glanced up at the broken ground which we had scrambled down, I couldn't help feeling that nothing but a lift would ever get him up at all. Of course, the night before I had seen nothing; now, if anything, I could see less—there was nothing left to see; nothing but a great, untidy sort of pit. It was incredible to think that a solid, well-planned, soundly-constructed building of considerable size could have been there only an hour or two before. So far as I could see, there was only one thing left to show what might have been—that was a sort of mound standing up about the centre of the pit, though what it was doing there, or what its presence meant, was beyond me. But one of the officers who had come with the Brigadier seemed to understand in a moment. I heard the General say:—

"This seems to be a case of not one stone being left upon another."

The officer I was referring to pointed to the mound and replied:—

"There is what's left of the battery—perhaps half a million's worth of guns. Unless I'm mistaken, there's still one left. It may have possibilities about it of doing mischief yet. I doubt if that has been really moved; it's possibly only covered by a dozen feet of earth. Investigation might disclose the presence of others."

"Investigation," said another officer standing by his side, "might discover the presence of other things. The main building, with all in and about it, has been blown to kingdom come, but I shouldn't wonder if the men had their spades they would soon show that there's a good deal more of real interest left than you might suppose."

"The great thing, from my point of view," struck in the doctor, "is—is anything left of human interest? Is Sergeant Briggs all that is left of those good fellows? Haven't even the Germans left so much as a shoulder strap?"

An answer came from one of our fellows who was wandering about with some of the rest, looking for what they could find. What he had found he didn't quite seem to know, but it was something. Presently the doctor announced that it was part of a German officer's tunic, which had been torn from the wearer's person. In what seemed to have been a sort of secret pocket was a roll of papers; like the whole thing, they were as black as soot. When the roll came to be unwrapped, it became evident that it was part of what was probably an official plan. In the very centre of the roll was a woman's photograph—an unmounted print, evidently taken by an amateur. I never saw it, but from what I heard it was the photograph of an uncommonly pretty girl. The doctor, annexing it, slipped it into a pocket of his own.

"You can have the plans," he said; "I'll have the lady. You'll probably find in the papers something to show who the gentleman was; if you do it may comfort her to know that at the moment of his death he still held her to be the most precious thing he had."

I suppose we hung about there a good two hours. Quite what the idea was I can't say. Most of the men were nosing about in an anyhow sort of way, and some curiosities some of them hit on. The Brigadier and his staff were coming to certain conclusions of their own—I don't know, they didn't consult me; I only guessed it, but I have got a pair of eyes; so far as I could see, they kept putting their heads together and writing down things on bits of paper, so I suppose they were doing something. I don't mind admitting that I didn't carry on my observations for very long, because I fell fast asleep. I somehow got a little aside from the others—and oh, how I did ache! I felt sure that every bit of skin was coming off me, and every bone was

bruised. There was some nice tufty grass round there ; I sat down on it, because stand any longer I didn't seem as if I could, and—well, I suppose that was how it happened.

My experience is that the sweetest sleep you get is when you didn't ought to be sleeping at all. That was sleep, that was ; in a kind of a sort of a way I can still look back and remember all about it—straight I can. If you had seen as much soldiering as I have you would find it easy to believe me. All at once I got into that state in which you're not quite sure if you're asleep or waking. Presently I got pretty nearly sure that at any rate I wasn't asleep—I was awake enough to lie quite still and do my level best not to breathe. Someone close to me was behaving rather funny. He was lying pretty near full length on his stomach ; every now and then he moved a little forward, crawling on his hands and knees, as if he thought that was the best way in which to avoid attention. The grass was pretty high and pretty thick—I snuggled well into it, which I suppose was why he hadn't noticed me ; because he certainly hadn't—he wouldn't have behaved like he was doing if he had. When I opened my eyes I found that he was within a couple of feet of where I was, his back and head turned the other way. He was only moving forward an inch or two at a time, flat on his belly, like a snail ; the uniform he was doing it in was never made in England.

I thought the matter over ; I had plenty of chance of doing it—like a snail he moved so slowly. Somehow the sight of him made me wake up jolly quick, though what I was to do now that I had woke up I couldn't think. I could see he had a gun and a bayonet and a revolver ; and though that was enough for me to see, especially all together at a moment like that, I dare say he had half-a-dozen other useful articles as well. Well, I had nothing—I hadn't even my rifle. What had happened to it while I was in that tree I couldn't say ; but if I had tried to bring a gun when I started from the trench I doubt if I could have done it. Carrying myself had almost been a bit too much for me. I wished Ormiston had been at hand and tried to force a revolver on me as I had done on him before the whole bag of tricks blew up—it wouldn't have been long before I had hold of it. Then I'd have tackled my German friend.

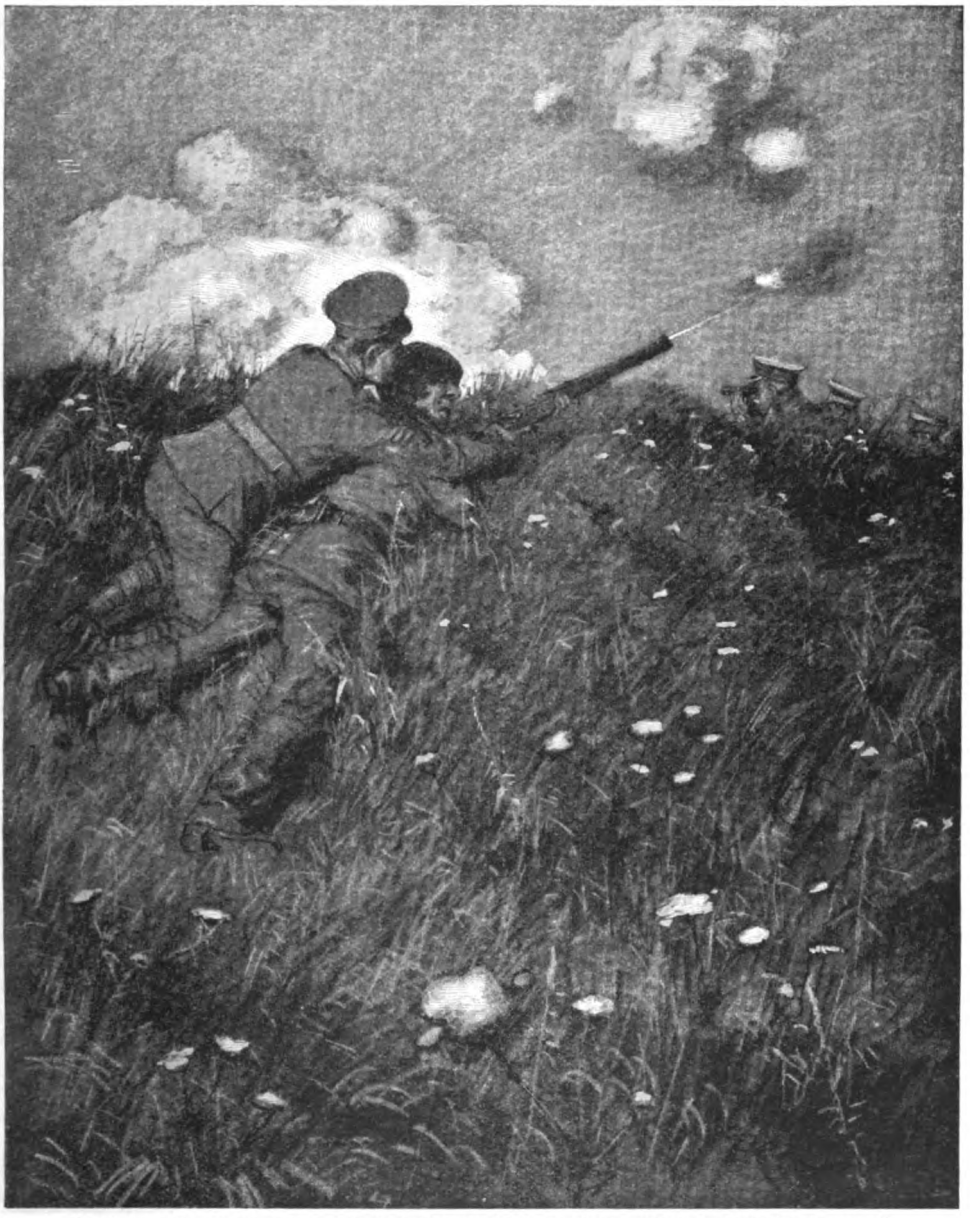
But what could I do with nothing at all—not even so much as a hairpin ? Evidently the gentleman in front didn't want to make any more noise than he could help ; I was just as anxious to be on the quiet side as he was. Probably he had friends just handy, who it might be just as well shouldn't know that we were there till it suited us to give them the information.

On my part there was quite an anxious spell of indecision.

Presently he began to do something which made it clear that it wouldn't pay to leave all the doing to him. Very gingerly, and very slowly, he started getting himself—and his gun—into a position in which he could shoot. Evidently from the way he was going on, wriggling and squirming, he had some target in front at which he proposed to aim. I couldn't see much from where I was, but every now and then, over the tussocky grass, I caught a glimpse of an officer's cap. I wasn't sure, but I had a sort of notion that that cap was being worn by the Brigadier. Possibly my friend proposed to do two things—to give the alarm which was being eagerly awaited by anxious friends quite close at hand, and at the same time to kill someone worth killing. To shoot an officer in the position of General Loring might render it worth while to throw away his own wretched carcass.

That might be his point of view, but it wasn't mine. I woke up still wider in less time than you might have thought was possible. There we were, playing a little game with each other, which might have been amusing for an onlooker to watch. Inch by inch up came his gun ; keeping pace, I turned more over towards him in the grass. We were so close that we were almost touching. He had brought his gun into a position that it only needed a touch and it was ready to aim and fire. The rest only depended on what sort of marksman he was. General Loring only needed to continue absorbed in whatever it was he was doing, and that part of the British Army would be left without a commanding officer.

The joke was that the Brigadier was not the only person who was too much absorbed in what he was doing. That German gentleman had every faculty strained much too tightly to suspect that just at the back of him there was me. I imagine that he took it for granted that he had that piece of ground entirely to himself, and never for a moment suspected that actually almost touching him there was me. His nervous system could not have been in such good order as it should, because when he did discover my near neighbourhood he was so petrified with amazement that he was like one whose wits had left him altogether. His hand was reaching down towards



"REACHING RIGHT OVER, MY FINGERS CLOSED ON THE TRIGGER INSTEAD OF HIS."

the trigger, almost touched it. I expected he would fire. But just at the critical moment I suppose the General did something which slightly altered his position. The unseen sniper waited what he probably intended to be a moment to get a better aim, which was a bad mistake on his part, because he never got it. Reaching right over, my fingers closed on the trigger instead of his.

I don't know what he thought had happened, but he seemed to be looking at the fingers which had been substituted for his as if he were looking at something supernatural. Then, very slowly, he turned his head round, and he saw me. How he did stare. It must have been the surprise of his life. While he stared I gave a little shake and a twist. The rifle came away from his grasp; I had it in mine. Then, I take it, he regained possession of his senses sufficiently to enable him to realize, at least to some extent, how he was being diddled. He made a grab at

his gun. I threw it just beyond his reach, on which he transferred his attention to me. His two great hands came towards my neck. I had learnt a trick or two of what I had been told the Japanese call ju-jitsu. I slipped between his hands and, possibly before he guessed what I was after, had him by the throat instead of his having me, so tightly and so quickly that I had the breath nearly squeezed out of his body before he had a chance.

Of course, that sort of thing wasn't going to go on for long without attracting attention. Presently a dozen chaps or more came crowding round, and the German was done. Up came the Brigadier, and the C.O., and a lot of the officers, and I had to explain. They questioned the prisoner; they wanted to know what his game was, but apparently he was keeping his breath to cool his porridge, because all he did was to look as if he would like to have a quiet word or two with me in private. I did what I ought not to have done; I got a quiet word with the Colonel, and took the liberty to tip him what might be called an uninvited wink.

"If you'll excuse me, sir, I fancy this chap has got a lot of his friends somewhere close. If they discover you're here, and General Loring, they'll do all they can to take you prisoner. It will take you some time to get back to the trench."

The whole lot of them grinned at me. Of course, I know it was like my cheek to shove in my oar, but it seemed to me that the General and his staff were like that German, too much engaged with their own plans to think of anything else. No doubt the General and part of his staff had come up there as hard as they could pelt to draw up some sort of plan for the defence of the battery which we had captured, and which the Germans might be counted on to do everything that was possible to regain. What that meant the General, of course, knew much better than I did. One of his staff laughed right out, a young fellow with a waxed moustache which turned up at the ends, as if he thought it was beyond anything for a chap in my position to open his mouth to drop a hint to his commanding officer—and I dare say he was right. I have a trick of being a bit too forward when I'm not wanted. But the General let me down lightly.

"I'm not so sure that Sergeant Briggs isn't right. The sooner, Stanway, you and I get back to cover, perhaps the better it will be." Then he spoke to the prisoner, whose game, whatever it might have been, I had rather spoiled. "You, sir, what explanation have you to offer? To what do we owe the favour of your presence here? Don't pretend you can't speak English."

The man's answer was a little unexpected.

"I speak English as well as you do. Is that information of any use to you? If so, you are welcome."

The fellow's manner wasn't impudent, it was just self-possessed. What I felt sure was a sudden inspiration gave me an insight into the game he would like to play. I had to open my mouth again.

"Beg your pardon, sir, for speaking again, but bluff is what he's playing at; he wants to trick you and the Colonel into staying as long as he can—till his friends come up."

At that moment a private of ours came hurrying forward—pretty excited he was.

"There's a lot of men coming up the hill. I believe they're trying to take us by surprise."

A chap, whose name I knew afterwards was Captain Waller, had his say. Some of our men were beginning to fidget; it was about time someone did speak.

"Steady, my lads! Don't lose your heads. Everything ready? Don't make more noise than you can help." He addressed the Colonel. "I fancy it's a largish force which is approaching. What are your orders, sir? Shall we hold them in check, or cover you?"

It seemed a funny question to address to the C.O., but somehow the whole jolly lot of us seemed to have got into a funny position. It didn't seem dignified for Commanding Officers to run away, but that was all there was left to do. It was out of the question to run any risk of having our chief pinched by the enemy; it might result in the entire dislocation of the general operations. Our whole fate lay, to a very large extent, in General Loring's hands. If he were made prisoner the whole lot of us might be in the cart. Recognizing, a little late, the truth of this, he turned to his own personal staff and began to ascend the slope. It would obviously not be easy for the C.O. to keep pace with him, but he did his best to try.

The men began to get themselves into something like order. Captain Waller, whom the departure of the others had evidently left in command, though he was a stranger to my battalion, and I had never heard of him before, showed himself no fool—I should have liked to have had him take charge of things before. I stooped down and picked up the German's rifle; they had strapped his hands behind him, so he couldn't do much; but his

language—even in English—was unworthy of a gentleman. Captain Waller had our chaps under cover, so far as he could get them—a smart piece of work it was. The general order it was not easy to give, but the understanding was that each man should fire as soon as he saw something to fire at, breaking fresh ground as he signalled.

It was some time before anything actually happened—very trying some of those moments of waiting are, with your heart in your mouth and your fingers itching to play the fool with your trigger. We all knew that probably the gentlemen coming up the hill had smelt a rat—in fact, several. They had no doubt expected to have news of some sort from their scouting associate. His silence no doubt roused suspicion. Their comrades had had enough of falling into traps during the last few hours; if they only knew it, they were within an ace of falling into something like another then. A few steps farther, they would have been greeted with a broadside of lead which would have been of the nature of an unpleasant surprise. Someone ought to have been looking after the German, someone instructed to thrust a gag into his mouth and keep it there—the omission to keep a properly watchful eye on him was not the only blunder which was made that day. Anyhow, just as I was hoping that the ascending force would offer itself in the open as an unsuspicious mark, a sound rent the air which could not have been more objectionable had it come from a dozen bulls of Bashan. Instead of that it came from the throat of a solitary German gentleman, who must have been collecting all his breath to enable him to bellow. He bellowed in German. What he said I did not know, but his friends did. There ensued an instant general stampede which spoilt the game for us entirely. How far those Germans ran, after taking the trouble to come all that way up, I could not say. I thought for a moment that Captain Waller was going to take advantage of their flight to send us after them, but, in my judgment very wisely, he didn't. Instead, he began to give orders as to how to hold the position—at least temporarily. Half the men he sent to the top of the slope up which the Brigadier and C.O. were still struggling, and from the top of which a comparatively good view could be obtained. Half the remainder, numbering some twenty men, he sent away to the left to form a flank guard and to keep an eye in that direction. Our noisy prisoner, trussed like a fowl and safely gagged, was persuaded to mount the slope, assisted by a man on each side and a useful bayonet from behind. Then Captain Waller himself proceeded to ascend in order to talk over matters with the C.O. and the Brigadier.

Personally, I was about done up. I'd have given all my chances of a war-medal to have got three hours' sound sleep on something soft. Wherever I touched myself something seemed to ache, and the more I tried to find a soft spot to lie on the more uncomfortable I became.

"Say, Sergeant, what do you think that affair might be?"

A man next to me—one of my section, named Drew, and a very cute chap and wide-awake I had always found him—pointed to what looked like a tumble-down shed about thirty yards from where the main battery had stood.

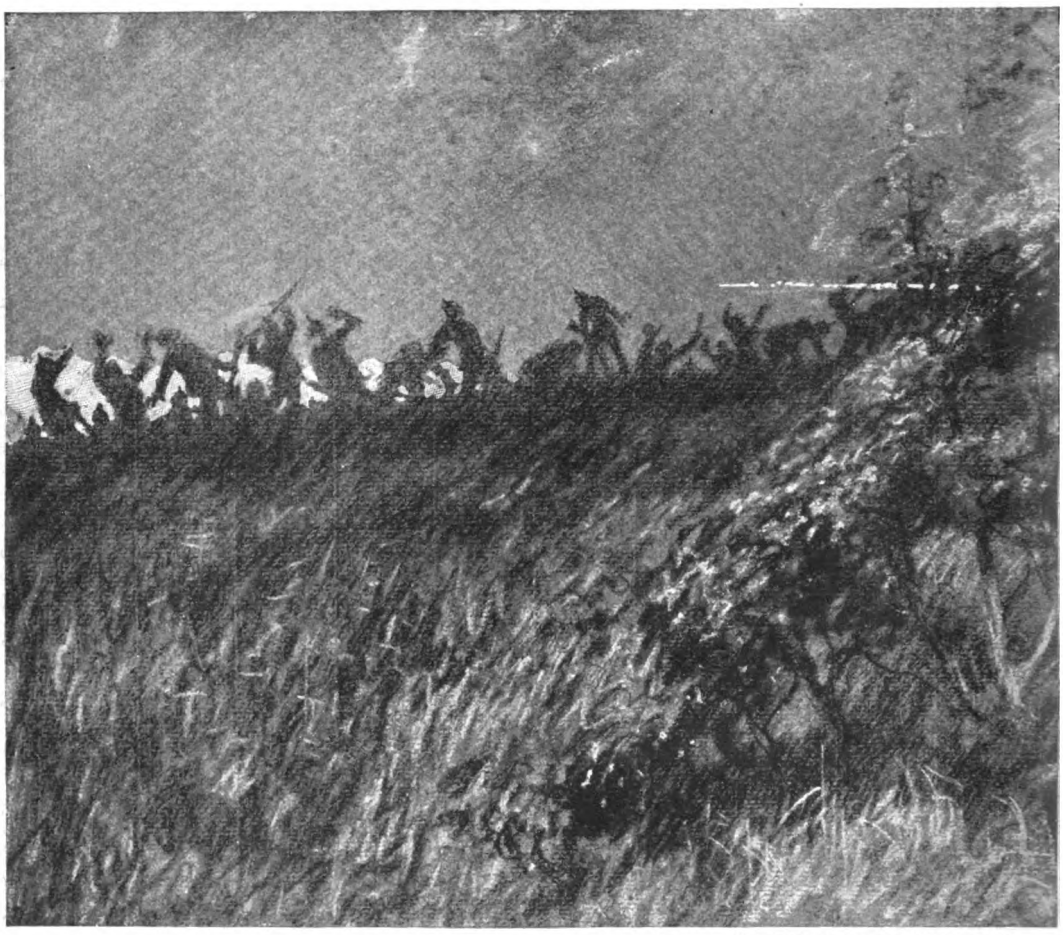
"I was having a look round there just before those chaps came on," he continued, "and it seemed to me as it might have been some sort of machine-gun store, judging by the short look I was able to give round."

When I heard that word "machine-gun" I began to feel very wideawake again, just as I had when that German chap stole up alongside of me.

"Machine-gun? Where? Bring another chap, and we'll go and have a look."

I knew what an extremely dangerous position the party was in. We were many hundred yards from our nearest supports, to get to which we had to cross country which at this hour—it being about eight o'clock and perfectly light—was open to the enemy's enfilade fire; and then, besides, our chiefs evidently didn't want to let go their hold of the battery without a struggle, and knowing the fewness of our number and the likelihood of the enemy bringing up a big force, I didn't feel very cheerful about the prospect of an attack. But I knew something about machine-guns—I had been in our section for about a month—and I knew well their value at such a crisis and in such a struggle.

So you can imagine I was all on fire to have a look at this store, though really I couldn't feel much hope of finding anything that wasn't absolutely bust in, so tremendous had been the explosion of the night before. However, we three advanced to the ruined shed. It was bigger and stronger than I had at first supposed. Nowhere had the force of the explosion been more clearly shown. The strong wooden planks of the walls and the solid rafters of the roof, all of new sound wood, lay flattened out as if blown down by some devastating hurricane. One end was



"I JUST PUT MY THUMB ON

smashed and splintered by a huge mass of twisted iron which had landed plump into it. Through this gap one could plainly see tripods and the double-handled brass holding-pieces of machine-guns. Down we rushed eagerly through the gap. But at the first glance my hopes were considerably dashed. The guns at that end of the shed were completely done in; bent and twisted and broken clean off their tripods, they were absolutely useless.

"Let's try the other end," said Drew. "There's probably some sort of door where we can get in."

So round to the other end we went. Drew was right. A double swing door had been made in this end, and the knocking down of the shed had crumpled the doors up, leaving plenty of space for us to wriggle through. I got through first; I had to bend double to do so. The first things I set eyes on caused me to give a shout of joy. They were boxes—small, grey-painted, tall, oblong-topped boxes. I seized one excitedly, pressed the spring, and opened the lid. Plunging my hand in, I took hold of the contents and held it out to the others—a completely-filled cartridge belt.

"That's all right for ammunition," I said. "Now for a workable gun."

We groped our way in and struck a match. We had difficulty in advancing, as we had to remain doubled up, and the floor was covered with objects. The match showed up these objects—lines and lines of machine-guns. Drew exclaimed:—

"Crikey! They don't 'arf seem to have some guns, these Germans. I almost forget what a Maxim looks like, one sees so few in our Army."

But the guns did not seem as though they were going to be much use to us. A great rafter had come down plump in the middle of the nearest line and broken all their backs, so to speak. Very delicate things, machine-guns. And the worst of it was we couldn't

THE DOUBLE BUTTON AND PRESSED."

go on any farther as the roof had smashed into the middle of it all.

Drew and the other man began hauling out all that lay near them, passing them to me for examination. Bashed in they all seemed to be—smashed water-jackets, smashed casing, crank handles bent or broken. All seemed pretty useless. Suddenly my companions gave an exclamation, and handed me one that appeared to be in perfect order. I tried it; it seemed to work all right.

"Come along now, you chaps," I said. "Let's get away with this. We can't mess about much longer, or they'll be on us before we get back. You carry the gun, Drew, and you, Sharp, bring as many cartridge-boxes as you can carry. I'll bring some more."

Out we got. Drew pulled the gun along on its sledge. All the German machine-guns are mounted on a sort of wooden sledge, otherwise they are practically the same as ours. When we got back you should have seen the excitement. All our chaps were well aware of the critical position, and, knowing the value of a machine-gun, they all fairly gasped with relief. Captain Waller so far forgot himself as to shake hands with me and say:—

"Sergeant Briggs, you're a wonder. You've found the very thing that will enable us to hold out till help comes. I thank you."

"'Tisn't me, sir." I pointed to Drew. "That's the chap as found it out."

The Captain shook Drew by the hand too, and thanked him, and promised him promotion at the very first opportunity.

"Fancy me a-swanking round at home as a blooming corporal!" he said to me later, grinning from ear to ear; but a thought seemed to strike him, and the smile flickered away. "But sha'n't I have to stand drinks all round, though!"

After talking it over with Captain Waller, we decided that the best place for the gun was

at the top of the slope, so, without wasting any more time, I sent Drew up with the gun and belts and started to climb up myself. First, though, I sent a man for water, which there was no difficulty in getting, the Germans not having forgotten to construct a big well not far from the battery.

All this hadn't taken very much time, so that the first excitement had carried me through. But that slope brought me back to the fact that I was not in the finest possible condition for mountaineering, and long before I had got half-way up I had to sit down and take a rest. I thought I never should do it. But that moment news was brought that a big body of the enemy was sighted at not many hundred yards' distance, making for the battery.

That did it. I heaved myself up, set my teeth, and told myself, "Now, Sam Briggs, you're not going to make a fool of yourself at such a moment. You're the only man here who knows how to work a machine-gun, and you're not going to give in. So buck up!"

I got to the top of that slope. I collapsed into Drew's arms at the top. Everything went round me, including a short, tubby man, with a grey moustache, who seemed to be throwing something at my face.

I came to, and found it was only Dr. McCann pouring brandy down my throat. The Brigadier and C.O. stood close by.

"If you can only keep them for twenty minutes, Sergeant," said the Brigadier, "we shall be all right. By then we shall have over two thousand men to our help."

That finished it. We went off in a body to select a position for the gun. I pointed out a mound on the left flank, where we had a good view of their probable line of approach at a range of at least twelve hundred yards.

"That will be a first-rate place to catch them by surprise. They don't think we have a machine-gun, and nothing but that could do them any harm from that point. We'll have time to lay several hundred out before they'll be able to turn their fire on to our position, and by the time they do that we can clear out, gun and all, and take up a nice position in the centre, where we can rake them on all sides."

This was decided on. We fixed the gun up at the top of the mound, just behind a small bush, laid the gun at the estimated range, filled up the jacket with water, loaded up, and waited.

Well, I think the rest is what they call "history." At least, I know it came out in the daily papers, a full report, somewhat too full in fact. I know I was said to have fired two machine-guns at once, one with each hand, at the same time controlling the firing-line on each flank, and many other such absurdities, whereas what I did do was simple enough. When the enemy, some thousand strong, walked across the alignment of my gun, I just put my thumb on the double button and pressed. As a matter of fact, any fool could have done that, but if you had seen the Brigadier, with his glasses in his hand, dancing—or rather wriggling, as he was flat on his stomach—with joy, you would have thought it was something wonderful. I kept my thumbs on that button until—whiz!—the water in the jacket boiled over and out shot a great cloud of steam. We hadn't got a condenser, and hadn't had time to look for one. Like greased lightning we sheered out of that position, and even as we did so we heard the bullets fly over us. In ten seconds they had the range of that mound, and there wasn't a square inch untouched by bullets..

But we were well away by that time, as you know, though it isn't true that I carried two machine-guns on my shoulders and a couple of ammunition boxes on my back. That report accounted for Dora writing to me, and saying how strong I must have grown to be able to carry two cannon at once!

No, far from it. Drew carried the gun, the C.O. carried one ammunition box, and the Brigadier, to all intents and purposes, carried me.

You know how afterwards the Germans, furious at their loss, began to close round on us on all sides; how tremendous was their fire; how fierce their rushes; how the gun had to clear out from position to position as they started turning their fire on to it; how the Colonel was shot through the arm while bringing up another cartridge box; how I tripped over a log while changing position once, and lay there fast asleep until the end of the action and the day was ours; and how the Brigadier was the first to pick me up, and how, on my being laid out, the Brigadier had gone on firing the gun until they ran out of water and the barrel gave way; how he then picked up a rifle and fought with the rest, until with a rush and a cheer a thousand of our men came up on each flank, and after a short bout of cold steel the Germans put their arms down and their hands up.

[*The thrilling experiences of Sam Briggs will be continued next month.*]

The Art of Mimicry.

That there are various phases of the art of stage mimicry will be evident from the following symposium to which a number of artistes—whose cleverness and skill both as impersonators and originators have made them so deservedly popular—have contributed.

MISS ELSIE JANIS.

MY imitations are not so much imitations as impressions of what I feel artistes do. I do not aim at broad mimicry and the bringing out of broad characteristics, but rather the finer points of the person imitated. Perhaps that is why I must *feel* at once that I can imitate an artiste if the impersonation is to be successful. That is to say, I make no deliberate study. I see the artiste once. If I like him (or her) I go home and with my mother, who is my severest critic, as sole audience, try to give an impression of that artiste—not a copy, but as I think they would impress the people.

Perhaps neither of us likes it. If so I leave it alone for a while—let the idea simmer in my mind. Then I try again, two or three times, perhaps. If I then begin to like the impression, I decide it is worth continuing with and in due course present it to the audience. If I am still dissatisfied, I drop the idea altogether.

MISS ELSIE JANIS,
WHO DOES NOT MAKE UP FOR HER IMPERSONATIONS.

Unless, however, I bring away a definite impression from a first view, I know that my imitation of a performer will not be satisfactory. I saw Sarah Bernhardt, Frank Tinney, Ethel Levey, and Harry Lauder, for instance, whom I portrayed in the first version of "The Passing Show" at the Palace, on one occasion only each, and the same remark applies to my impersonations of Gaby Deslys, Vesta Tilley, and others.

Ever since I was a wee child I have mimicked, and, indeed, I think every child born is in a way a mimic. Real mimicry, however, cannot be taught, only developed. When I was quite small I saw Miss Edna May in "The Belle of New York" before she came to London. As soon as I got home I attempted an imitation with a palm-leaf fan tied round my head. Then I went to my mother's room—she was ill at the time—and sang the chorus of "Follow On," much to her delight. After that I used to entertain the family with various imitations, and was allowed, almost without restraint, to

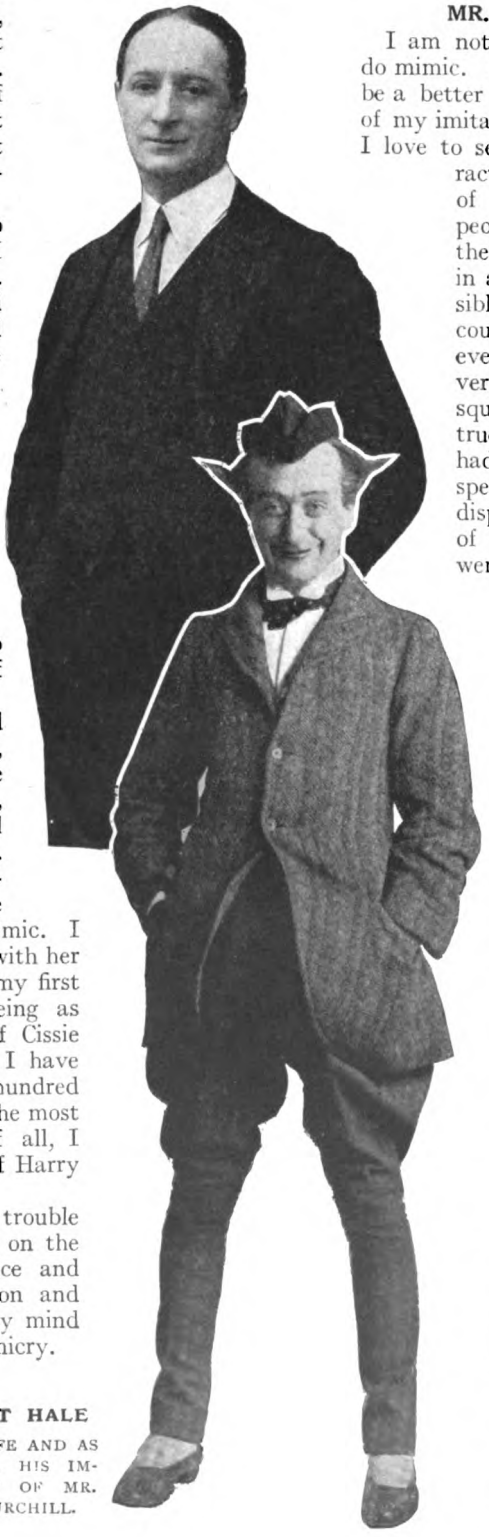
mimic whom I liked, when I liked, without fear of punishment. I enjoyed myself hugely, no doubt much to the disgust of some of my relatives.

My first great step was taken when I was seven years old. I accompanied mother to a social gathering at the White House, and was invited to entertain the company.

Without the least nervousness I audaciously mimicked the President (President McKinley) before his Cabinet, much to the delight of himself and his colleagues.

When I started upon my stage career, I was taken to see Miss Cecilia Loftus, the greatest of all mimics, in my opinion. It was she who inspired me with the idea of becoming a mimic. I tried and improved, with her example before me, my first stage appearance being as the pocket edition of Cissie Loftus. Since then I have impersonated some hundred and twenty artistes, the most popular imitation of all, I suppose, being that of Harry Lauder.

Make-up does not trouble me. I rely entirely on the inflection of the voice and the copying of action and gesture. That to my mind is the true art of mimicry.



MR. ROBERT HALE

IN PRIVATE LIFE AND AS MADE UP FOR HIS IMPERSONATION OF MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL.

MR. ROBERT HALE.

I am not quite sure that I really do mimic. If I did perhaps I should be a better actor. I prefer to speak of my imitations as stage caricatures. I love to seize upon the main characteristics and mannerisms of fellow-artistes and other people and present these in the spirit of broad burlesque in as kind a manner as possible, although one could, of course, be very cruel. But everyone is very kind and very indulgent. When I squared my shoulders in the true "Gee Gee" style and had a set of false teeth specially made for prominent display in my impersonation of George Grossmith there were no complaints. But then I don't believe a man with Grossmith's sense of humour could censure anybody.

Lord Lonsdale, too, was quite affable when, to comply with the demands of the modern revue, I impersonated him. While I had the cigar all right, however, the side whiskers, he said, were at fault. He seemed to be highly amused, nevertheless. I invariably find that public men have the keenest sense of humour, and no one laughed more heartily than Mr. Winston Churchill and Mr. Lloyd George when I indulged in exaggerated mimicry of themselves.

I am afraid that my figure and extremities add little to my imitation of Mdlle. Deslys, although that delightful and clever daughter of France has had some pleasing things to say regarding the impersonation. It is somewhat of a task, however, to change from

the dainty Gaby to Horatio Bottomley in five minutes in "5064 Gerrard" at the Alhambra. I rely to a great extent on make-up, which, of course, helps considerably in bringing out, so to speak, the broad points of the person imitated. Indeed, in some impersonations, make-up is absolutely essential, otherwise the words and actions would be lost. I could scarcely hope to imitate Mr. Matheson Lang in "Mr. Wu," for instance, without endeavouring to copy his wonderful make-up of the ruthless Chinaman. At the same time, make-up has its disadvantages, for a fair likeness is not always easy to get in a few minutes. Noses are my great trouble. I do not like the prepared noses. I always like to model it myself, and readers will, therefore, understand my difficulty and sympathize accordingly when I had to transform my somewhat prominent nasal organ into the retroussé nose of Mr. Gerald du Maurier, whose Raffles I always delighted to endeavour to imitate.

Candidly, however, I have no favourite imitation. Anything that is topical is my favourite. I am continually searching for people to impersonate and always studying types. I have no real methods of study. In the case of an actor or actress, I simply see them once, and if they have any characteristics of which I think I can give a burlesque imitation I watch them again to make sure of my points and then build up an exaggerated copy. I never repeat their lines. I simply say what I think they might say in the particular scene into which I introduce them, the imitation being in every sense the broadest burlesque. In the case of public men—politicians, etc.—I rarely trouble to see them. I study their portraits and read as much as possible about them, and that is usually sufficient groundwork for me to build an imitation upon.

MISS MARIE DAINTON.

MISS MARIE DAINTON

AND SOME OF HER MOST POPULAR IMITATIONS.

Mimicry is an illusion. Most actors and actresses can imitate someone else. They would not be actors and actresses if they could not. For their whole art is mimicry. But the "professional mimic" should be able to tabloid half-a-dozen different characters in eighteen or twenty minutes. That is the only excuse, shall I say, for giving imitations. Any art there may be in mimicry depends entirely on whether the impersonator is versatile, for as I have said before, all actors and actresses can imitate; therefore, to be able to sing, dance, and act is essential.

Otherwise one is merely doing what scores of non-professional mimics could do if they wanted to—at least, that is my opinion.

The greatest test is the voice, as any ordinary understudy can imitate gestures, movements, and mannerisms. They are the easiest to pick up, but to suggest soprano and contralto voices alike is where the illusion of true mimicry comes in. The next important point is a sense of humour. In fact, that and versatility are all there is in it.

Your own individuality must peep out now and then and just point out the mannerisms of the artiste in an elfish sort of way and be lost again in the imitation. One of my most successful imitations is Miss Ruth Vincent. Ethel Levey, however, is a great favourite with audiences, and I love "doing" her, because for me she is quite an achievement, as I haven't a contralto note in my composition. That is where the illusion comes in—to produce, or seem to produce, different qualities of voices.

One of my test impersonations was Lew Hearne and Bonita singing "Hitchy Koo." That was "some" sound Lew Hearne produced. I own I had to cultivate it, but it was one of the best and funniest imitations I have had the luck to get, as it was unique. That is what I like—imitations out of the beaten track.

I suppose I am a natural mimic, as I have always been able to imitate, making my first professional appearance at the age of twelve. But I never had any ambitions regarding imitations; for as much as I love seeing other people do them, I want original and entirely creative work. Imitations hamper one.

I have never had the slightest objections from artistes. They don't mind you "pulling their leg" a bit. That is how I first hit on the idea of showing how famous artistes would act and sing in different circumstances; for instance, how Marie Lloyd would sing "Every morn I bring thee violets"; Mme. Sarah Bernhardt would render "Snooky Ookums"; Mrs. Patrick Campbell, "You made me love you," etc., etc. Needless to say, such burlesques never fail to amuse. I should like to say that none of the above-mentioned artistes stood in my way. Of course, it is always a great courtesy for both managers and artistes to permit you to use their songs, and should always be accepted as such.

I was three weeks in New York before I appeared, and I opened with six new American imitations—I suppose it was the lovely climate—as I am not always so quick. I gave "An English Girl's Impressions of American Artistes," and received the following one night from, I suppose, a galleryite: "My Dear Miss Dainton,—The woods are full of 'imitators,' but you're away out of the woods!" Was ever a compliment rendered more charmingly?

One of my most successful imitations in America was of Miss Maud Adams, the great American actress. I also did the *prima donna* from "The Chocolate Soldier," and their celebrated coloured comedian, Bert Williams.

Among my "victims" in this country are Ruth Vincent, George Formby, Sarah Bernhardt, Marie Lloyd, Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Gertie Millar, Jack Norworth, Vesta Tilley, Laurette Taylor, Evie Greene, Lily Brayton, Elsie Janis, and Basil Hallam.

I can't quite tell you how I "get" my imitations, because I don't quite know—it's just a knack—that's all.

MR. BRANSBY WILLIAMS.

It is many years ago since at the London, Shoreditch, I began to give impersonations of famous actors. On the occasion of my *début*, I remember, I gave imitations of Sir Henry Irving, Sir Herbert Tree, E. S. Willard, Harry Paulton and Shiel Barry. And although it was the cordial reception accorded me on that occasion which encouraged me to persevere with my impersonations, and although since then I have imitated probably every actor and variety artiste of note, I have always found that however clever one might be as a mimic, one is looked on not as an originator but as a parrot. It was this which led me to desert mimicry for a time and play characters from Dickens, making monologues and sketches out of the characters of the great novelist.

Certainly there is some justification for regarding the mimic as a parrot, for when we see an amateur actor giving imitations of great men, we find ourselves thinking, "Well, if So-and-so was like that he would never have made the name he has done." Probably many readers have heard the story told of Toole and nowadays of Nat Goodwin, who saw a mimic do a scene of his and afterwards remarked, "Say, one of us is rotten."

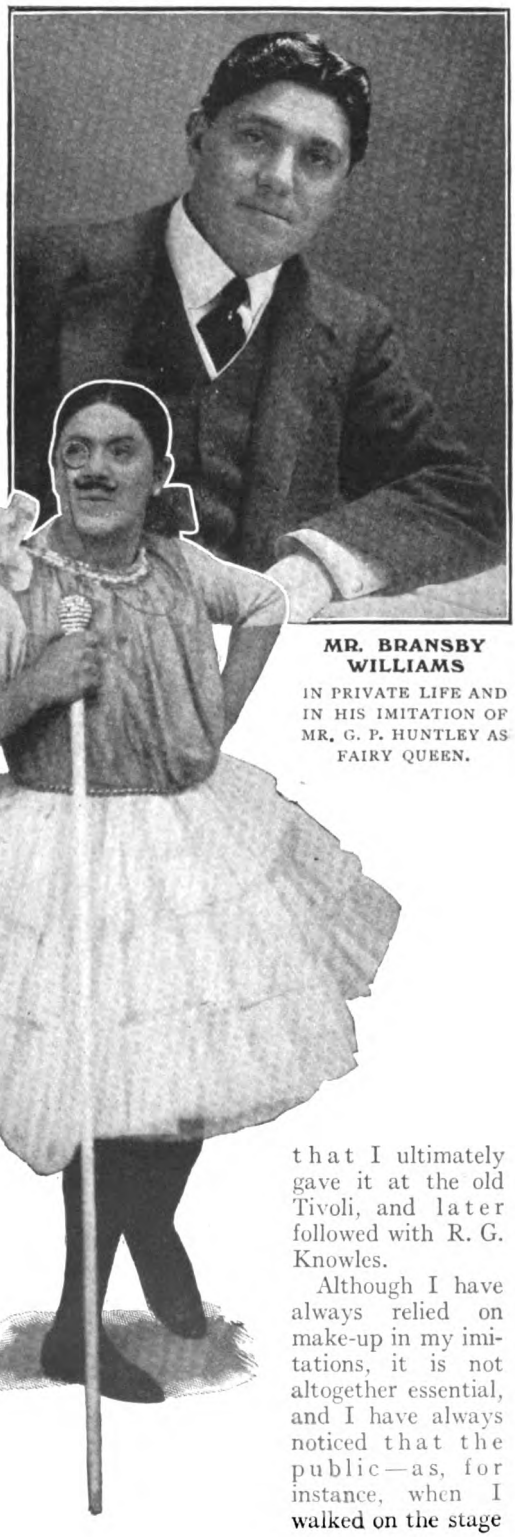
Dear old Toole loved my mimicry, and it is a source of much gratification to me that with my imitations I was able to bring a few bright moments into his life in the evening of his days at Brighton. I very often used to pay Sunday visits to him, and after dinner

was over he would raise his glass and give a knowing look in my direction. I knew what he meant, and I would then drink to him as from absent friends, imitating the voice and manner of each of those he always held dear. I would perhaps commence with Sir George Alexander, followed by Sir Charles Wyndham, Sir Herbert Tree, and so on, reserving his dear old friend, Sir Henry Irving, to the last, and he would beam at Irving's voice and say "God bless you, Harry."

I mention this because it seems to me that to thus be able to people a room or a stage is, to say the least, a very gratifying accomplishment. It depends on the artiste, of course, as to how far the imitations become parrot-like. One must possess creative powers to give an imitation, if it is to be given with any power and force.

The readiness with which famous actors have given me permission to imitate them and the admiration they have expressed make me conceited enough to think that there is some originality and art in my methods, although Sir Herbert Tree ran away from my imitation of himself on one occasion. It was at a certain gathering where he made a speech, and hearing I was to be put up next to help entertain the company, he promptly decamped. I wondered if I had offended him, and wrote him to that effect, to which he replied with his characteristic wit: "I only left the other evening at the psychological moment because I am always rather nervous about seeing myself imitated lest I should lose that self-conceit which is so necessary to one's aplomb in working."

Undoubtedly, however, my best imitations, both in regard to voice and make-up, were those of Dan Leno and R. G. Knowles. It was not until one day I went to a garden party at Dan's house and to entertain the company we decided that he should imitate me in some of my Dickens characters and I should imitate him, that I thought of including impersonations of comedians in my repertoire. My imitation of Dan at the garden party, however, seemed so much appreciated that I ultimately gave it at the old Tivoli, and later followed with R. G. Knowles.



MR. BRANSBY WILLIAMS
IN PRIVATE LIFE AND IN HIS IMITATION OF MR. G. P. HUNTLEY AS FAIRY QUEEN.

Although I have always relied on make-up in my imitations, it is not altogether essential, and I have always noticed that the public—as, for instance, when I walked on the stage

at the Tivoli in jacket suit and no make-up to do a "turn" in an emergency and gave various imitations, leaving the audience to judge who they were—have a remarkable knowledge of the particular styles of prominent artistes and are quick to appreciate a correct imitation.

Generally speaking, however, audiences like burlesques rather than real impersonations. They prefer George Formby as Romeo to Forbes Robertson in that character. Personally, I would sooner do real imitations, as it seems to me easy to seize upon the points of an artiste and exaggerate them. But if I do not feel that I can imitate an artiste after seeing him once, I do not think I can do so at all, for I regard mimicry as inspiration, not study.

MISS MILLIE SIM,

WHO GIVES A MOST LIFE-LIKE IMITATION OF MR. BASIL HALLAM.

MISS MILLIE SIM.

Really, I hardly feel competent to express an opinion on the art of mimicry, for until I began to give imitations with Mr. Arthur Playfair in "Odds and Ends" at the Ambassador's Theatre not so many months ago, I had not attempted such work.

Like most children I was fond of imitating grown-ups and copying their mannerisms behind their back, and then going into another room to make other children laugh with my crude exaggerations. It was very rude, of course, and I remember that I felt the heaviness of the parental hand on one occasion when I was caught making a particularly bold impersonation of a sensitive relative.

However, this did not stop my fondness for imitating everybody with whom I came into contact possessing pronounced mannerisms or peculiarities of voice, in the combination of which, in my humble opinion, lies the true art of mimicry. For while, of course, dress is helpful, I think an imitation is more effective without depending on dress. Moreover, I always endeavour to imitate exactly. I do not try to burlesque. I do not sing a song as I think the artiste I am

MR. VERNON WATSON
AS HIMSELF AND IN HIS IMITATION OF MR. G. P. HUNTLEY.

impersonating ought to sing it, but as they really do sing it, or as near as possible, which I think is the best form of imitation.

I seriously thought of becoming a mimic after hearing Basil Hallam on the gramophone and giving an imitation of his voice at a party. "Why don't you go on the stage?" asked my friends, who were pleased with my performance. Which was very nice and flattering, and—well, here I am. I had some stage experience before attempting imitations, but I do not think it helped me a great deal in my impersonations, as such work seems to require a special knack. My impersonation of Basil Hallam has proved perhaps the most popular because the original himself is so popular. Audiences, too, seem fond of my mimicry of Harry Tate and his son, whom I present as Big and Little Willie, while my impersonation of Miss Elsie Janis as Florrie the Flapper seems to be much appreciated.

I love, however, to impersonate people like Miss Laurette Taylor. She is not difficult to imitate, particularly in regard to her voice, the Irish brogue being very effective. Another favourite impersonation of mine is that of Miss Lily Brayton in "Kismet."

MR. VERNON WATSON.

I have always held the view that the presentation of striking contrasts constitutes the real art of mimicry. That is why I regard my imitations of Mr. G. P. Huntley and Frank Tinney as my best. They are in no sense burlesques. I try to avoid in my impersonations seizing upon peculiar points and exaggerating these, although one is apt unconsciously to do so. I prefer to take, as it were, a piece of the work of a popular artiste and present it in as exact a manner as I possibly can.

The broad humour of Tinney appealed to me as soon as I saw him. I had my doubts about the "make-up," but having got this to my satisfaction, I did not find much difficulty in presenting an imitation which has proved one of the most popular in my repertoire.

I am rather fond of mimicking Mr. G. P. Huntley, and people have been kind enough to say it is one of the best impersonations I do; but generally speaking I prefer to imitate variety artistes. Impersonations of George Robey, T. E. Dunville, George Formby, Joe Elvin, Harry Tate, etc., seem to be most popular. And it is not difficult to understand why. The music-hall public, of course, know them so much better than actors on the legitimate stage.

I do not think I can tell

MR. ARTHUR PLAYFAIR

IN PRIVATE LIFE AND IN HIS IMPERSONATION OF SIR HERBERT TREE AS MICAWBER.

you much more of striking interest about my work. Mimicry since I was a boy has fascinated me, and my victims have been invariably kind and tolerant. And my grateful thanks are due to their magnanimity when I consider how badly I must have libelled some of them.

MR. ARTHUR PLAYFAIR.

There are many people who think that to give an imitation of a famous artiste is necessarily to be funny. Of course, one can usually raise a laugh by burlesquing. But that to my mind is not real mimicry or impersonation. To give a representation of an artiste exactly as he (or she) is, without exaggerating either manners, gesture, or voice, is, in my opinion, real mimicry and real artistry. I am not speaking now of myself, who plead guilty to so many burlesques, but of mimicry in a general sense. Generally speaking, however, the public seem to prefer the burlesque imitation. Perhaps this is because they do not know sufficient of the actor or actress imitated to grasp the more subtle points, but understand enough to appreciate a broad caricature. So much so, that even to be the original may be disappointing.

I am reminded in this connection of the story of a famous tragedian who was on one occasion behind the scenes in a music-hall. A performer who was friendly with the tragedian, and who had been giving imitations of various noted actors, was about to respond to an encore.

"Whom do you imitate next?" inquired the tragedian.

"Well," was the reply, "I was going to imitate you in Hamlet's soliloquy, but if you are to be looking on, I'm afraid I shall make a mess of it."

"What's the matter with me imitating myself?" remarked the tragedian; and hastily putting on the other actor's wig and buttoning up his coat he walked on to the stage and delivered the well-known lines.

Next morning "the impression of the eminent tragedian" was stated by the critics to be the poorest imitation of the whole series!

After all, however, every actor and actress is a mimic. They clothe themselves for the time being in the actions, mannerisms, and

thoughts of some character they have read about in books or in a play which has been written, and mimic them according to the author's ideas coupled with their own.

Personally, I have always loved to mimic people. There is a certain fascination in watching such actors as Sir Herbert Tree, Sir George Alexander, Mr. Charles Hawtrey, Sir Charles Wyndham, and Mr. Seymour Hicks, for instance, and endeavouring to make yourself like them, and then, as a contrast, try a little bit of Arthur Roberts or Wilkie Bard "on the dog." My friends tell me that they like me best as Sir Herbert Tree in "David Copperfield," and I must confess that I, too, have a weakness for endeavouring to show the public how he ought to appear but does not.

MR. NELSON KEYS,

WHOSE MAKE-UP AS LITTLE EM'LY IN A BURLESQUE OF "DAVID COPPERFIELD" IS HERE SEEN.

At one time my great ambition was successfully to imitate the late Sir Henry Irving. But when I found that hundreds of other people thought, like myself, that if one copied his peculiar gait it might be considered a passable imitation of the great actor, I sought other fields.

The most difficult actor I have tried to impersonate is Mr. Charles Hawtrey, although from 1901-4 I fulfilled a long engagement with him. There is so little to seize upon in regard to his voice or mannerisms. He is what I might describe as a quiet actor whose great charm lies in his natural aptitude rather than in any idiosyncrasies. Sir George Alexander and Sir Charles Wyndham I have found fairly easy, while Mr. Seymour Hicks is such a bundle of mannerisms that anyone with any pretensions to the art of mimicry should have no difficulty in giving a "slight impression," to quote the favourite phrase, with so versatile a subject before them.

MR. NELSON KEYS.

To be a good mimic you must have a fly-paper mind. Perhaps the most remarkable fact in regard to my impersonations of other artistes is that if I see too much of a man I cannot imitate him. I have been told that one of the best imitations I ever did was my

impersonation of Alfred Lester in the Revue of 1914 at the Palace. Yet to have given even a slight impression of him while we were appearing for nearly two years in "The Arcadians" at the Shaftesbury would have been impossible.

Again, take the case of Basil Hallam, with whom I have been appearing so long in "The Passing Show." I cannot "imagine" him at all, for the simple reason that I see too much of him. When you see a man daily, your mind is apt to become a little confused through knowing too much about his characteristics when endeavouring to seize upon some marked mannerism which will enable you to give an impression of his style.

Like the caricaturist who seizes upon one point for a picture, I must get a man at once for a successful imitation. It is no use my sitting down to study him. If I cannot seize upon one characteristic I give it up. And there is something which tells me instinctively, after seeing an actor in one performance, whether my mimicry will be satisfactory.

But then, again, it has sometimes happened that I have caught what I thought was an admirable idea after seeing an actor, and then to my chagrin have lost it. I remember going to see Fred Terry one night when he was playing in "The Scarlet Pimpernel." I thought I saw my way to an excellent imitation of that popular actor, and went to bed very pleased with myself. In the morning, however, I had completely lost the idea, and now whenever I see Mr. Terry he remarks with a chuckle :—

"It's no good, Keys, you can't imitate me." But I intend to have a good try next time.

When I have got what I think will be a successful imitation, I usually endeavour to add just a touch of burlesque. Not too much to make the mimicry exaggerated, but sufficient to make the characteristics of the person imitated a little more pronounced, because I do not think the public like absolutely exact imitations. It pleases them to see points they themselves have seen in an actor brought out, so to speak. For instance, one of the best of my latest imitations is that of Gerald du Maurier in "Raffles," in which I neither sing nor talk, but merely add a little humour to his many mannerisms, which gives an added interest and is a very delightful study.

I prefer to imitate actors on the legitimate stage rather than variety artistes, and nothing pleases me better than to impersonate artistes such as Mr. Charles Hawtrey, H. B. Irving, Henry Ainley, "Bunty," Miss Moffat, and Eric Lewis. And greatly I have been encouraged by the interest the artistes themselves have shown in me.

I suppose since the day when I was persuaded by intimate friends to give an imitation of Mrs. Patrick Campbell at the Green Room Club dinner, I have tried to imitate most of the leading artistes of the day. To be imitated is the penalty which every actor with a strong individual style has to pay; but I am inclined to sympathize with them when I think of the story of the provincial visitor to London who conscientiously "did" a round of metropolitan entertainments, at nearly every one of which some comedian or other imitated Mr. George Graves. At last the voyager reached a theatre at which Mr. Graves was actually engaged. When the comedian entered, the provincial audibly protested to his companions that he was "sick of these fellers imitatin' George Graves."

M. Sim, Photos. by Wrather & Buys; V. Watson, Photos. by Claude Harris and Foulsham & Banfield; B. Williams, Photos. by Ellis & Walery, and Foulsham & Banfield; A. Playfair, Photos. by Ellis & Walery and Foulsham & Banfield; R. Hale, Photo. by *Daily Mirror*; and N. Keys, Photos. by Foulsham & Banfield.

The Explorers

By

H. B. MARRIOTT WATSON.

Illustrated by

HENRY EVISON

WHEN Tannahill reached his old camping-place just above the little cataract he was mildly interested. There were evident signs of a recent encampment, and so far as he could judge they were not more than a day old. He browsed about among the bushes with an aroused expectancy quickening his detective forces; and he found tins of two kinds. One had contained meat and bore a known American name; while the other had the insignia of a proprietary Swiss milk. Who the dickens, he reflected, could be using Swiss milk in that wilderness? Who the deuce would have the meticulous thought to carry Swiss milk several thousand miles to a mid-African forest?

He seemed to get his answer a little later, when after supper he was stretching himself idly and wearily in the dusk, and the boys were gabbling about their fire after the work was done. His right hand, moving at random on the surface of the earth, was brought up by something which his subconscious sense recognized as requiring an explanation. His fingers closed on it and he carried it to his eyes. It was absolutely amazing, but there could be no question: it was a hairpin he held.

Who was this woman astray in that hazardous country? A hairpin! Symbol of civilization and home, and charged with sweet and bitter memories of old days—of youth, of summer evenings on the river, of theatre parties, of dances. Oh! he turned impatiently from the reverie with a shrug of his shoulders. He had been three years in this outland waste, and had almost begun to forget. Well, he had better forget. This rush of memories through his mind, provoked so absurdly by a trivial object, seemed altogether painful.

When he was striking camp in the morning he thought of his predecessor again, and wondered what she did there, and whither she had gone. But on the march, the thought passed from him; he was occupied by other cares, and one in particular—which centred on Obutu. He had misgivings about Obutu, whose evil reputation was widespread, and had even reached the Tanganyika missions; and yet to follow out his plans would carry him right through the Kalili country. His expedition, which was now in its third year, included in its scheme the exploration of the headwaters of the Weolo; and he was certainly not going to return without attempting this. His European companion and friend, with whom the work had been originally undertaken, slept, alas! in the deep silence of the wilderness three hundred miles away. Tannahill refused to turn back.

That night he camped on the bank of the river, and on the following afternoon he came up with Philippa Maidment's party.

Tannahill's first feeling was one of amazement, and then it gave way to a definite and sensible pleasure. Across the hundreds of yards of open which still separated them after he emerged from a piece of jungle he could detect the helmeted head and short skirts and gaiters of a woman, and the recognition frankly thrilled him after the instant's surprise. He made haste towards her.

"Will you allow me to restore you your property?" he said, showing his teeth above his short beard in smiling delight; for he had by an odd whim kept the hairpin.

"Thanks!" she said, echoing his smile; and then, with a laugh, "Won't you introduce us?"

"I can introduce myself," he said. "John Tannahill, very much at your service, and engaged in exploration for the Geographical Society."

She looked at him as if considering for a moment ere she replied.

"Philippa Maidment, on her own," and laughed again. His glance took in the "boys," who had halted with their packs and bundles, and were gazing with some curiosity at the two whites.

"You are not by yourself?" he asked.

"Indeed, I am," she answered.

He made no comment on that, but inquired as to her itinerary. It seemed she had come from Mombasa, and had been three months on the road. It had been splendid—"most exhilarating; I mean the feeling of these vast solitudes."

He smoothed out his moustache. "Didn't you meet anyone?" he asked, half-playfully.

"Oh, a few. I had a delightful experience at a village belonging to the Wamboso."

"Oh, yes; old Kassuva—nice old boy." He stroked his beard as it were thoughtfully.

"Where did you manage to find this?" she asked.

"Oh, that! I succeeded you in camp by the rapids. You see, it was mine originally."

"It was wonderful!" she said, with enthusiasm.

"What do you say to tea?" he inquired, suddenly.

Her eyes twinkled, and her smile became her. "I've got tinned milk," she said.

"I haven't tasted milk for five months. That was why I suggested tea," he said.

"How did you know——" she began.

"I have been three years in darkest Africa," he said. "Besides, a Swiss tin——"

"Oh!" she laughed happily. "I'm so glad to speak English once more. Do let's have tea."

He issued orders to his "boys," who began at once to make preparations under a spreading tree. As they talked Tannahill had opportunities of inspecting her, and his verdict was favourable. She was, he guessed, thirty years of age, of middle stature, good complexion and features under the African tan; and there was an air of energy and resolution in her mien. Her talk was full of intelligence, and she evidently prided herself on being "in the movement." She was one of the most up-to-date young women he had come across. She talked a good deal, because he pressed her with questions. He had been so long out of civilization, and he wanted to hear of European things from an observer and witness at first hand.

"And now tell me about yourself," she said, at last.

"There are no political or social movements in Central Africa," he said, with a smile. "You are just interested in yourself and nothing more."

"Your work?" she queried.

"Well, that's yourself, in a way," he said.

"And you've accomplished what you wanted to do?" she inquired, with interest.

"Not all," he replied. "I should have done so if poor Turton hadn't died."

"Ah!" her exclamation, breathed gently, was sympathetic.

"He died of fever twelve months back in the Shuta country," he explained. "He was the brains of our expedition—one of the finest biologists and choicest spirits I have known. I'm a mere surveyor."

"I think you must be more than that," she said.

"Not much," he said, smilingly. "But I'll take back what I can. Look!" He pointed up the great river to where it disappeared in a bend towards the ranges. "It's a lure; it's a bait. There's something attractive about it. Do you remember Kipling?

> Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look behind the Ranges—
> Something lost behind the Ranges. Lost and waiting for you. Go!

Well, I'll take all I can back, even if it isn't much. I'll find something."

She looked at him with interest and with something else in her gaze. He was a fine, lean, bronzed man of five-and-thirty, without any pretensions to good looks. But he impressed her with a sense of power.

"I'm sure you'll do what you want," she said, simply.

"And you?" he turned abruptly from his vision. There is a vision, there is idealism in science no less than in art.

"I," she said, "am on my way to the Congo."

He stirred, wondering if he had caught the name rightly. "The Congo!" he repeated.

"Yes—I want to go down the Kasai River to the coast."

"But that will take you through the Kalili," he said.

"I know."

"Do you know about the Kalili?—their reputation? Have you heard of Obutu?"

"They said something about it at the mission station," she said, carelessly.

There was silence for fully a minute, and then he replied.

"If they told you the facts you would surely not be here?"

"Why not?" she asked, sharply.

"Because Obutu is a devil incarnate—because the Kalili have the vilest reputation in Central Africa; because—oh, because it's impossible—I mean this trip of yours."

She set her face firmly. "I don't agree with you. I have found no difficulty all the months I have been travelling. I am not without experience of the African tribes."

"Tamed—pap-fed—children," he ejaculated, impatiently.

"You are evidently one of those who think women are incompetent to do things that men do," she said, with asperity.

"Heaven knows I couldn't do what women do," he murmured.

She was not mollified. "People like you are living in the past," she went on. "Men and women are not on the terms they were in the boasted Victoria epoch. That time has gone by. We are in a new era."

"Yes," he said, quietly, almost interrogatively, as if he wanted to hear more; but she had shot her bolt and relieved her mind. It was ridiculous to spend the time quarrelling with the first real human being you had seen for two months. She looked up the river where the dusk was gathering.

"You are going that way?"

"Yes," he assented.

"I wonder—would you mind if we went together so far as our paths are similar?"

"It would charm me," he said.

There was no further reference to the subject of her expedition that night, but when Tannahill had retired to his tent he sat still for some moments, after knocking out his pipe.

"Oh, the dear fool!" he said at last. "And this is what higher education and the feminist movement means!" and, having said so much, he sank upon his blankets, stared through the opening in the tent at the stars, and passed into deep thought. It was late before he fell asleep.

In the pass of the gorge a thunderstorm shook the hills. It had seemed formidable in the plains; here it was terrific. The lightning burst from depth to depth of the heavens, and the deluge overwhelmed them in a place where cover was impracticable. The river below boiled, and sent up columns of steam or mist, and Miss Maidment looked down at it with awe.

"I have never seen anything like this," she murmured.

"You are wet through," he said, solicitously.

She laughed. "You will never get over those old-world notions about women," she said. "So are you."

He spoke after a moment's silence, and rather solemnly. "See here, Miss Maidment, I want to put an appeal to you. Please consider it. I have a rude knowledge of the country, and there is a tributary of the Weolo from the south. The pass there would take you Zambezi way. Take it. For Heaven's sake, take it! You don't know where you're going. Obutu——"

She laughed. "You think he'll be a sort of thunderstorm. Well, you see I'm not afraid of a thunderstorm."

The gorge suddenly crackled and roared with the discharges in that narrowed gulf, and for a moment all else was wiped out. They could only see each other; and then as suddenly again the whole pass flashed into vivid and unnatural light, and the artillery rolled overhead.

"I'm not afraid," she was saying, when the thunder passed. He put a hand on her arm, on which the savage rain was descending. "No, nor of that," she cried, triumphantly. "Women are not where you left them."

"I wonder if that is true; or, being true, whether it is of any use," he said.

"It is progress," she claimed.

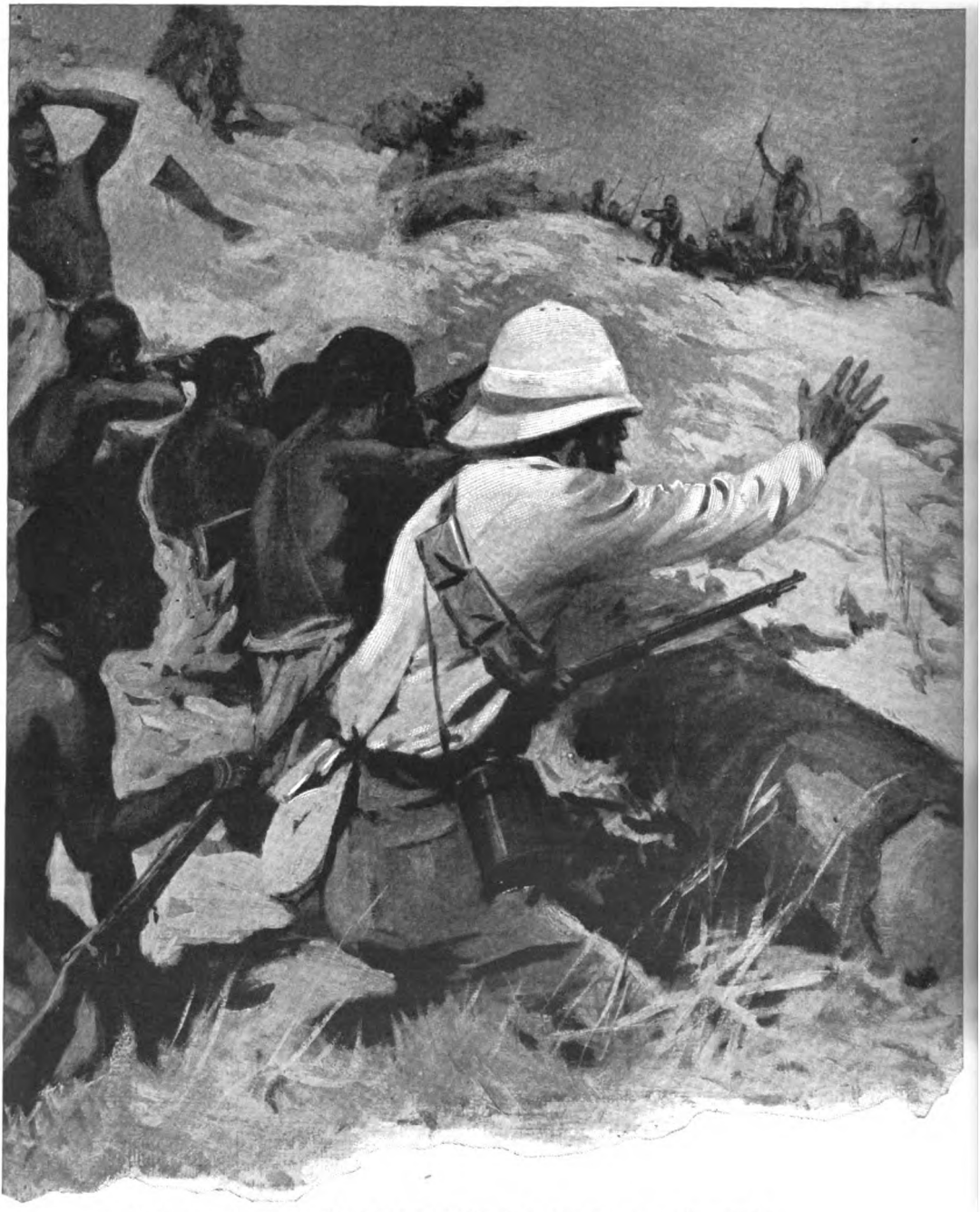
"Progress!" he mused, and suddenly abandoned theoretical discussion. "Obutu spent some months at the mission stations, was considered to have embraced Christianity, suddenly disappeared, and was next heard of as in revolt against his paramount chief in Kalili. By the most infamous savagery he made himself master of this region, and his history since, so far as rumour has spread it, has been incredibly inhuman."

"'Enter Rumour painted full of tongues,'" she quoted, smiling.

"I propose to follow the river," he said, abruptly.

"That should be my route also, so far as Oofan," she said, pleasantly.

The thunder burst above them, and the lightning illumined the gorge. She stood thus exposed to the ferocious elements without a symptom of fear or dismay. He could not but admire that fine folly, and yet



"GO BACK! GO BACK! DROP TO YOUR KNEES, FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE!"

in his heart he experienced a feeling of anger. It was in a state of indignation that he made his entry into the country of the Kalili.

Philippa interpreted his silence as disapproval, and resented it. She felt more determined than ever to adhere to her resolution, and to disprove the frail and artificial theories of mere man. She had triumphantly overcome the difficulties of wild African travel, and showed what a woman could do on her own devices. She would demonstrate still further and more forcibly the emancipation

Miss Maidment's bearers he had recognized at once as a docile, peaceable, and soft folk from the Wamboso district. Choka, who knew something of Obutu and the Kalili, was full of eager excitement. He anticipated a "brush." Looking round on the cumbered party Tannahill wondered if he were right in going ahead. Miss Maidment was smiling.

"Now it is getting interesting," she said.

It got more interesting in the next hour when the advance party were attacked in the bush and driven in. The Kalili were well armed with old-patterned rifles. They dodged through the forest, and fired into the crowded pack of Miss Maidment's frightened bearers. Tannahill, who was a dozen yards from Miss Maidment at the time, called to her quietly:—

"Drop down where you are behind that tree."

She seemed to hesitate a moment, and then obeyed. With a glance at the oncoming savages he slipped across to her after an order to Choka. A fallen tree offered a natural

of woman and her claim to equal rights and equal powers. They had gone through the gorge about midday; and it was late in the afternoon when they had the first news of Obutu.

It was about six of the long equatorial day when Choka, one of Tannahill's "boys," who spoke English after a fashion, came in from the van and reported the presence of natives. Choka was in charge of Tannahill's scientific apparatus, and was proud of his trust. The boys were wayward, tricky, faithful, and came of a fighting stock, as Tannahill knew.

barrier to the attackers, and Tannahill took cover behind it with a dozen or more of his "boys." These had all been accustomed to the use of firearms, being many of them in their third year of service under the white man. They took their places at a gesture from him, and began firing. No one of them was a super-excellent marksman, but the Kalili came on in insolent defiance of their foe. They were evidently in superior numbers; but a good many fell before the rather hysterical fire of the "boys." Tannahill exhausted his magazine, and looked round for Miss Maidment. To his horror he saw that she had left the tree, and was drawing near to him. He put up a gesticulating arm. "Go back! Go back! Drop to your knees, for Heaven's sake!"

The spit of a clumsy fire emerged from the brushwood. His outstretched arm seized her and unceremoniously dragged her down. She stumbled and fell to his clutch quite awkwardly and roughly. He turned and began to discharge the refilled magazine, but even as he did so had a sickening sense of the uselessness of his action. From behind the trees emerged a fresh band of Kalili; they would be overpowered by the sheer weight of numbers. Behind the trunk which shielded him and the woman, who had dragged herself to her knees and was gazing with fascinated eyes at the scene, were three or four dead "boys"; others were keeping up a ragged fire from different points. But the Kalili advanced recklessly; and suddenly turning, Tannahill saw a detachment breaking through the undergrowth from the rear. It was all up!

Miss Maidment had followed his gaze, and she, too, saw the new danger, though she did not fully comprehend all that it involved.

"Do you think they'll beat us?" she asked, anxiously.

Tannahill did not answer for a moment; there flashed through his mind a question. He had a horrible, despairing feeling that he would fail of his duty and not turn the last shot in his magazine against his companion. It was his duty. He knew it; he knew it—and he dared not.

"We can go on fighting till all is over," he said at last, "or we can surrender. Which——"

"We will surrender, then," she said, breathing deeply. Life was sweet to her; she did not like the look of death as it engirdled her so starkly there. Surrender! He dropped the muzzle of his rifle, realizing that they were both covered by guns from two sides. A big native with the air of authority advanced with a gesture. He wore a ridiculously battered army cap.

"Him captain," whispered Choka at Tannahill's ear.

"Obutu?" inquired Tannahill.

"No—Obutu no big. Me talk him."

Choka got to his feet and made a ceremonious gesture, a salaam such as had never been learned under the missionaries. Tannahill listened to some jabber, and then Choka turned.

"Him say—take you Obutu—mem also. No hurt."

"Thank goodness," said Miss Maidment. "They appear to have some inklings of civilized usage."

The big Kalili had turned. Twenty yards away Philippa's "boys" were standing in a frightened group, like hunted, expectant animals. More talk passed between the captain and Choka, and Tannahill impatiently demanded what it portended.

"Him ask how many packages. Him want boys." Choka spread out the fingers of both hands. The Kalili had evidently determined on his carriers, and orders were given sharply, Choka cheerfully undertaking their superintendence. This was the work of only a few minutes, and at the end the bundles had all been shouldered. There remained some seven or eight of Miss Maidment's boys burdenless.

"This man has a system. He seems an organizer." Her immediate fears relieved, this attempt at light and disinterested comment broke from her. It jarred on the man for some reason, and he pointed.

"Organizer! Yes; look!" he said.

She looked. Half-a-dozen of the Kalilis, armed with rifles, were coolly engaged in shooting down the defenceless "boys" who remained over. The captain had got his tally; these were superfluous encumbrances.

A low cry of horror broke from Philippa's lips. She had had a taste of war and had set her teeth together, but this was not war!

Obutu's capital lay on the river a day's march away, and the prisoners were treated considerately on the road. They were fed with good, fresh food, meat, and vegetables, and Philippa's spirits rose. After all, she reflected, Obutu had come in contact with civilization and doubtless had absorbed some of its amenities. The horrid acts she had seen had been the commission of his underling, who had evidently strict orders as to the safety and comfort of the captives. Choka, who was allowed some liberty, confirmed these favourable impressions by his cheerful

garrulity. But Tannahill knew him for a child-like liar, and did not lay much stress upon his views. Choka's gossip among the Kalili had brought scraps of knowledge which he emptied into the ears of the white people. Obutu had an organized army of many guns —he was a slave-raider into surrounding territories—he had great stores of ivory—he was a great man—he had white men at his court.

It was on that last statement that Philippa fastened. Obutu might be a tyrant and a slaver—that was the way of equatorial kings ; but if there were whites at his capital it was evident that he was not so barbarous as rumour had stated. Tannahill made no attempt to disabuse her mind of its optimism ; indeed, he encouraged her, acting as cheerfully as though they were launched suddenly on a surprising and unexpected but quite pleasantly exciting expedition. By the afternoon of the following day, when they arrived at Oofan, she had been worked into a very hopeful mood. Oofan was a large, widespread village built of mud and wattles, a sort of glorified kraal. The king's "palace" was in the centre of the kraal.

Tannahill was now separated from Miss Maidment, and placed under guard in a hut near the river. It was with deep concern and terrible misgivings that he impotently endured the parting. He was treated well, as heretofore, given good food, and left to his own devices. Three hours passed, and the brief twilight was over. Darkness was settling in the hut when Miss Maidment, to his astonishment, was ushered in by native guards. One of the Kalili brought a lantern, which he swung from the roof, and it shed a pleasant glow. Miss Maidment eyed it with a smile.

"Another sign of dawning civilization," she said. "I recognize the brand, do you? It's one of those two-and-elevenpenny things at the stores," she laughed. "I've seen Obutu. Really it was a wonderfully interesting experience. I wouldn't have missed it for anything. He's—well, he's a native, of course, but he is a very superior one. There's a missionary staying here. Obutu wants to be regarded as European."

"Is that why he took us prisoners?" he asked, mildly.

"Of course that's his barbarian aspect ; but he's quite attractive—interesting that is, in his way. He's not what you would imagine—a medium-sized, lithe, cadaverous-looking man of forty, with very civil manners and quite a nice smile."

"He spoke to you?" Tannahill was wondering.

"Yes," she laughed, in embarrassment, and went on with a forced air of indifference. "It seems he did me the honour to admire me. Choka interpreted. I told him what I wanted to do—do what no other woman—or man either—had done, and he seemed to understand. He nodded, and then made through Choka the ridiculous suggestion that I need go no farther. In fact," she laughed, "he proposed to me."

Tannahill looked at her fixedly. Her face was flushed and she was under evident embarrassment. "It was an awkward situation," he observed, slowly, "and I should like to know the upshot."

"Oh, of course I declined." She was exceedingly nervous by now, and showed it. "He has religion of a sort. There is a Presbyterian minister—I told you. He said that this minister could perform the marriage ceremony. Oh, it is humiliating to talk of!"

"But you succeeded in putting him off?" he insisted.

Suddenly she broke out almost with defiance, "Yes—at a cost. I lied, you know. You won't mind. I said I was your wife, and couldn't be his. You see, he has brought back some sort of Christianity from the mission stations. He has this Presbyterian minister——" She broke off. "You don't mind? It seemed the easiest way out."

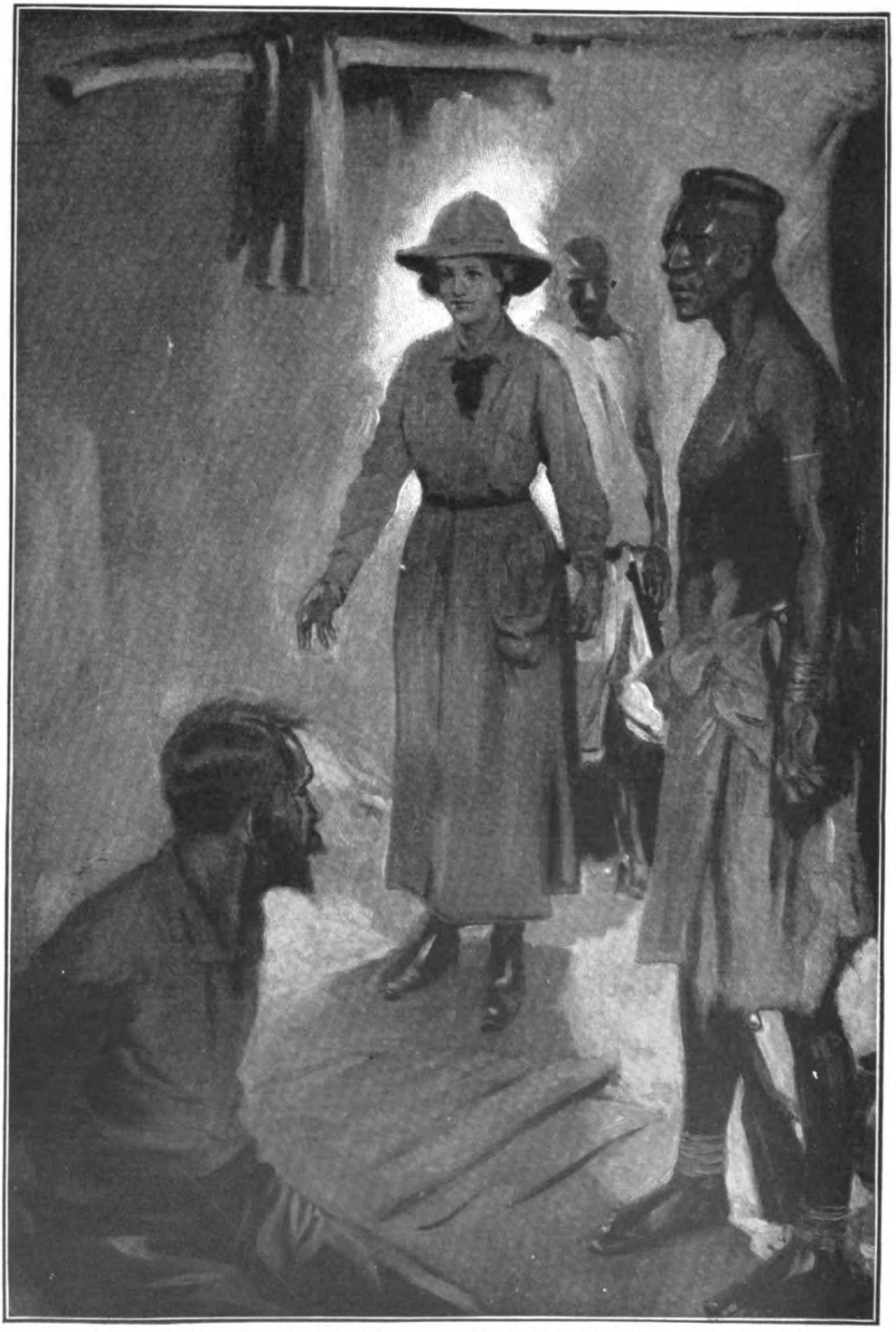
"Why, of course not. Did you think I should? The mere idea is an honour." He looked smilingly at her.

She seemed relieved, but thanked him with an exhibition of nervousness which he had hardly anticipated. Then she passed to other subjects, in the midst of which they were interrupted by the entrance of armed natives and Choka. The latter explained that Miss Maidment must retire to her lodgings, which, it turned out, was a hut a hundred yards away.

When she was gone brightly, Tannahill sat brooding over the news she had brought. His reflections were acute and lasted long, and occasionally passed into spoken language—as thus :—

"Now, why the deuce did Obutu let her come here?" and, again, "Poor dear fool! Poor——" and silence. He had thrown over his considerations in a tumult of worry in order to sleep, when once more he had a visitor. The room was dark now, but by the inflowing light of the moon he recognized that the man who had entered was not a native.

"Who is there?" he called.



"MISS MAIDMENT, TO HIS ASTONISHMENT, WAS USHERED IN BY NATIVE GUARDS."

"'Ssh!" enjoined a voice. "Speak low. I don't want to arouse anyone. I'm the Rev. David Moss. I've been here for three years."

"Mr. Moss, you're welcome—to my prison," said Tannahill.

"I've come to see you about the terrible business. I have a staunch friend among the Kalili, whom I saved by medical attention. I am a medical missionary. That is why I am here; but we must be careful. Your wife is across the way. I don't think she realizes, but you have to know."

"I know already," said Tannahill, quietly.

"What! You know that you are doomed?"

"What else could it be? I have some knowledge of Obutu."

"Once I thought otherwise," said the missionary, in sad tones. "I had hopes of converting Obutu really to Christianity. That is why I did not resent my captivity at first. He was amiable and I had plenty of liberty, and he seemed to like to talk to me. He expressed belief in certain dogmas. I had hopes that the Lord——"

"Mr. Moss," said Tannahill, "have you ever read the history of the Hau Hau War in New Zealand?"

"No," said the Reverend David.

"Well, it is interesting. If you ever get out of this read it. The Hau Haus blended the instructions of the missionaries with their own paganism, and the result was remarkable—Judaism, Christianity, and Maori superstitions all woven into a web. I think your Obutu must be another example."

"I don't know. I have hoped against hope—he seems to have some inkling of—— But it is about yourself I came, Mr. Tannahill. Obutu has resolved to wed your wife. He is a determined man. And that means——" He paused.

"My going," put in Tannahill, dryly. "I understand, and acknowledge the wonderful civilizing effects of missionary work."

"Of course I should refuse to perform the ceremony," said the Reverend David, quickly. "But don't think I've merely come to tell you that. I can offer better help. There is this native who is attached to me. He has charge of you. I can arrange with him for an escape. I have arranged it—at least, an escape from Oofan. There is a boat on the river at this moment, and you have only to——"

"Alone?" interrupted Tannahill, with sudden query.

The minister shook his head sadly. "Yes, there is no possibility of arranging your wife's escape. It is only because Imbah is in charge here that——"

"I am infinitely obliged," said Tannahill, again interrupting without ceremony, "but I could not go alone."

"I understand your feelings," said the missionary, hurriedly. "I have never ceased to revolve the situation in my mind. I guessed you would feel like this. But it was my duty to do what I could—to make my offer. Your staying will do no good."

He eyed Tannahill, questioningly.

"I thank you," said the latter, simply. "When is it to be?"

"At dawn," said the other.

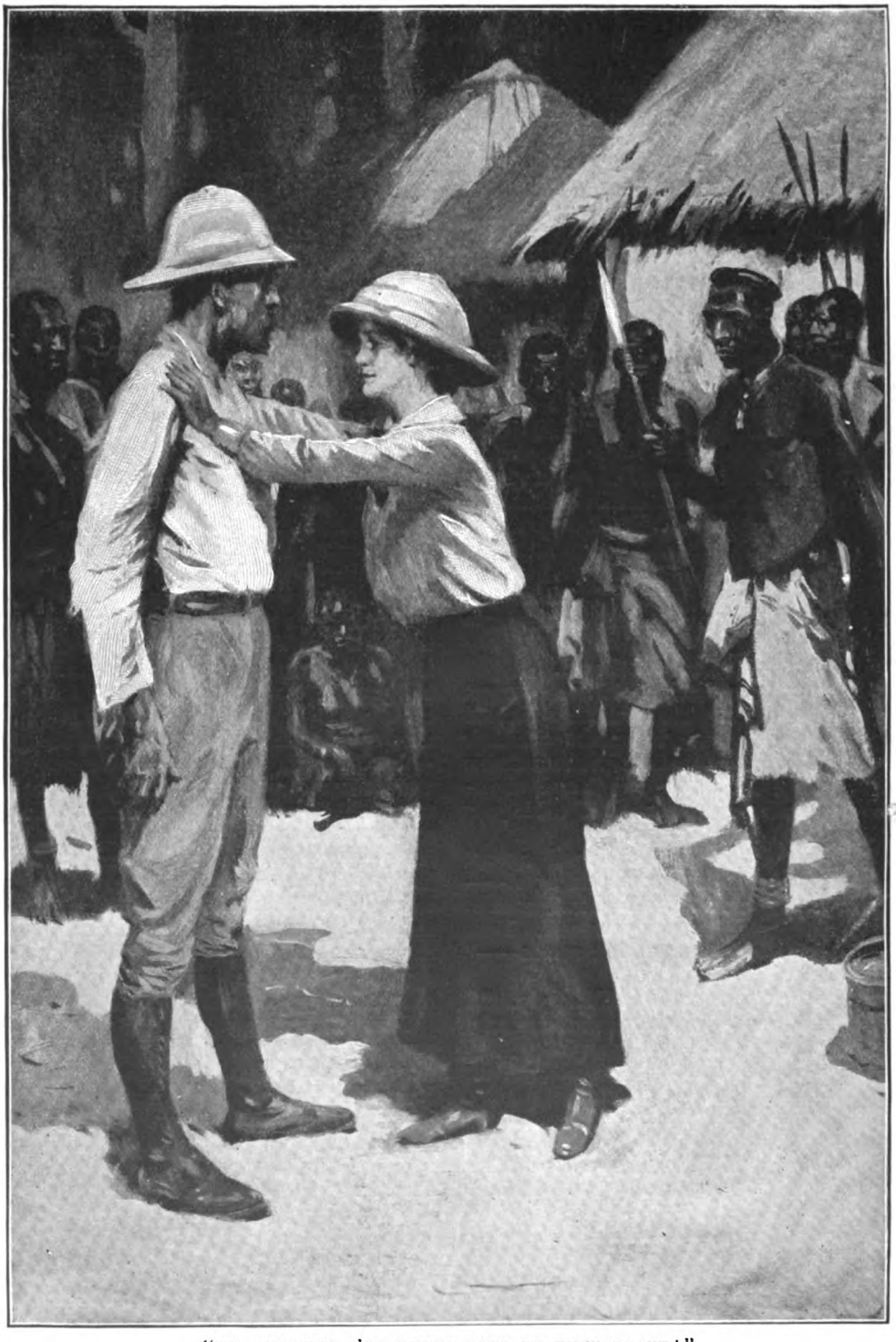
"Well, I'm ready." He paused. "Whatever you can do for—for her—I will trust you to do."

"I will do all that is humanly possible," said the missionary, earnestly, "and when God helps, anything is possible."

The dawn was not far off, and when he was alone Tannahill made no attempt to rest. He sat on the mud floor of the hut revolving many thoughts. Some of these contained strange and wayward glimpses of delight; but in the main his reflections were black and tragic. From sheer exhaustion he dropped into sleep, from which he was awakened by his guards. As he marched out into the open, where the night was dispersing in a mist of gold, he had one persistent thought—that he ought to have had the courage to use his revolver when the Kalili fell upon them. He saw Philippa Maidment, staring as she rested on her knees beside him in the forest—staring with a glow of excitement in her eyes at the oncoming natives. He ought to have used his revolver then. He shuddered and shut his eyes; and she drifted across their spiritual vision still. He stumbled against one of the guards, and suddenly opened his eyes to a wild turmoil.

Someone was struggling, fighting with natives, and it came to him with a sense of wonder and awe that it was a white woman. It was Philippa, whose face had been drifting before his inward vision at that moment. She had broken from the stalwart Kalili who had opposed her progress, and who was obviously under orders to treat her tenderly. She reached Tannahill's side breathlessly, crying:—

"Mr. Moss has told me. It is true. Oh, heavens, I've signed your death-warrant! And you—you never said a word. Oh, heavens!" she panted, and put her arms about him suddenly, with frightened, flaming eyes.



"OH, HEAVENS, I'VE SIGNED YOUR DEATH-WARRANT!"

"Hush, Miss Maidment! Do you think I should have been allowed to go in any case?"

"You could have escaped—you refused!" she cried, and buried her face on his shoulder.

Tannahill was strangely and intimately stirred.

"It is of you I am thinking," he said, brokenly. "I should have shot you there. That was my mistake. I should have shot you. But I dared not. I was a coward."

"No, no!" she whispered. "It is all right. I have made him promise—the missionary. He can get me a revolver. He refused first, but I made him promise. He said——"

At this juncture strong hands separated them roughly. Tannahill guessed that it was only because the friendly native, Imbah, was in charge that their interview had been so far uninterrupted. But now the end was come. In the grey dawn the black cloud of Kalili shut her off from him, and the desolate march resumed.

Tannahill said afterwards that he had no real sight of Obutu. His vision was dimmed, partly because of the obscure light, and partly because he was no longer occupied with his surroundings. There was an inward vision still. Yet he was aware of a cadaverous shadow somewhere in the distance, of a troop of natives with guns, and of an interested assembly in the open space in among the huts in which he stood.

A stir in the section of the crowd away to his right suddenly arrested him, drawing his eyes; and he saw men running. He was aware of that, and then of a break in the swarm of natives, as of a mob that heaved and swayed and dispersed, leaving a gap open. The cadaverous figure emerged into prominence, faded, and was blotted out in a rush of black forms. There was a noise of firing, and then a stream of flying natives through the lines of the houses. Tannahill suddenly heard the rattle of a machine-gun; and, his senses quickened now, marvelled and stared. He was alone, at least unguarded in a crowd of disorganized savages; and he began to walk away. No one paid him any heed. The machine-gun spluttered viciously from somewhere near. Tannahill was aware of dead and dying.

At the opening of the square he met a short, dark, sunburnt European who waved an arm to him.

"We are just in time," he said in French.

"Within thirty seconds," answered Tannahill, breathing deeply now. "May I ask to whom I owe my life?"

"Captain Wylendt, of His Belgian Majesty's Congo Service," said the new-comer. "We have long had our eyes on Obutu. We determined to get him when we could. He has been raiding our territory for years. We made a dash for it down the river. Our base is twenty miles away."

"I congratulate you, and I thank you," said Tannahill, simply. "You know——?"

"The priest met us. We dropped down unexpectedly; and there is a lady, too."

"Yes." Tannahill looked anxious. The captain grinned.

"Oh, they're hopelessly beaten—in flight. Our gun was the trump card."

"And Obutu?"

The captain grinned again. The Congo has its secrets.

It was two hours later, and Tannahill had eaten a hearty breakfast supplied by the friendly Belgian. Miss Maidment also had been a guest, and the missionary. Now duties had called these and other officers of the expeditionary force away. Till then the course of the conversation had been general. Now a silence had intervened, and was growing awkward. Philippa rose and looked across the river on the bank of which they were.

"I'm glad to be going back," she said at last.

"You are willing to give up the project of crossing to the Congo coast?" he asked.

"Yes, I shall return to Mombasa," and then she added:—

"And you?"

"No. I shall finish my work. It will take me a week," he said, slowly, "and then I am going down to Mombasa to meet my wife."

There was a perceptible pause, and then she said, in a curious voice which seemed to rush over the words, "I didn't know you were married. It will be nice. You will be glad to——"

"You remember what you told Obutu?" he asked.

"That I was——? Yes." She had paled and looked at him piteously. "You forgive me?"

"Goodness gracious," he said, suddenly, and laughed aloud. "I told the Belgian the same thing just now." She looked frightened, wondering. "Don't make it false, dear," he said, and put out his arms.

"No, no. I was afraid—I thought——" She ended in a sob, but the sob was in his arms.

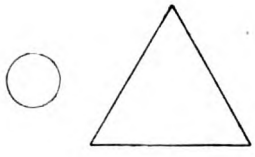
A Confession-Book for Artists.

Here is a continuation of the novel adaptation of the old idea of Confession-Books, the questions being answered by artists, not in writing but by pictures. Our readers may look forward to other adaptations of the Confession-Book in succeeding numbers.

WILL OWEN.

1. WHAT IS YOUR IDEAL OF A PRETTY GIRL

2. YOUR IDEAL OF A WELL-DRESSED WOMAN

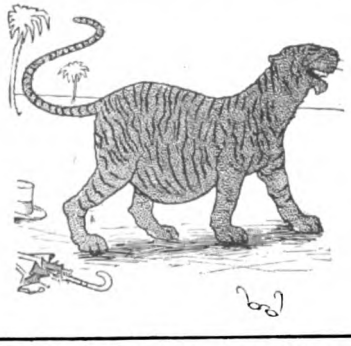


LIMPET (TRIANGULARIS ISOSCELEASVIOUS), FRONT ELEVATION AND AS SEEN FROM ABOVE.

3. WHAT IS THE EASIEST ANIMAL TO DRAW

SIR JOHN JELLICOE.

4. WHO IS THE EASIEST MAN TO CARICATURE



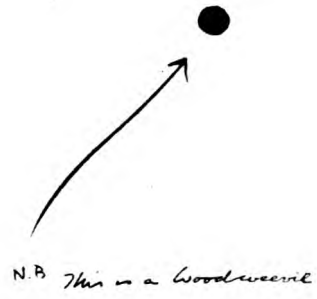
5. AN OPTIMIST AND A PESSIMIST

6. YOUR PET AVERSION

LAWSON WOOD.

1. WHAT IS YOUR IDEAL OF A PRETTY GIRL

2. YOUR IDEAL OF A WELL-DRESSED WOMAN



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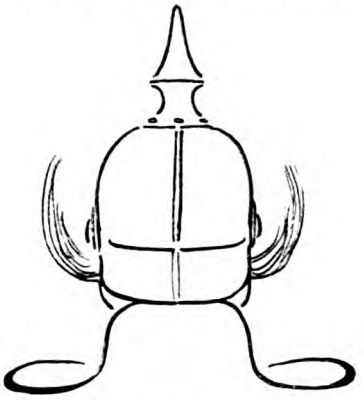

4. WHO IS THE EASIEST MAN TO CARICATURE

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6. YOUR PET AVERSION

G. E. STUDDY.

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2. YOUR IDEAL OF A WELL-DRESSED WOMAN

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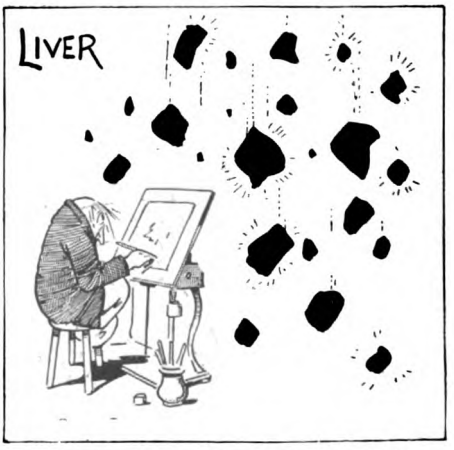


6. YOUR PET AVERSION

A. K. MACDONALD.

1. WHAT IS YOUR IDEAL OF A PRETTY GIRL

2. YOUR IDEAL OF A WELL-DRESSED WOMAN

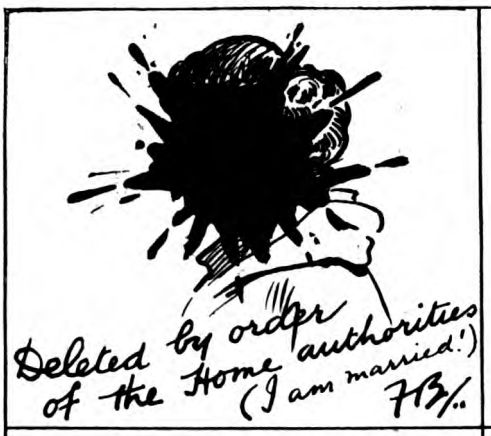
3. WHAT IS THE EASIEST ANIMAL TO DRAW

4. WHO IS THE EASIEST MAN TO CARICATURE

5. AN OPTIMIST AND A PESSIMIST

6. YOUR PET AVERSION

FRED BUCHANAN.



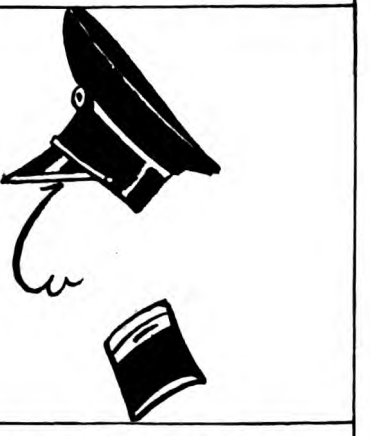
1. WHAT IS YOUR IDEAL OF A PRETTY GIRL

2. YOUR IDEAL OF A WELL-DRESSED WOMAN

A MICROBE.

(AS SEEN BY THE NAKED EYE).

3. WHAT IS THE EASIEST ANIMAL TO DRAW



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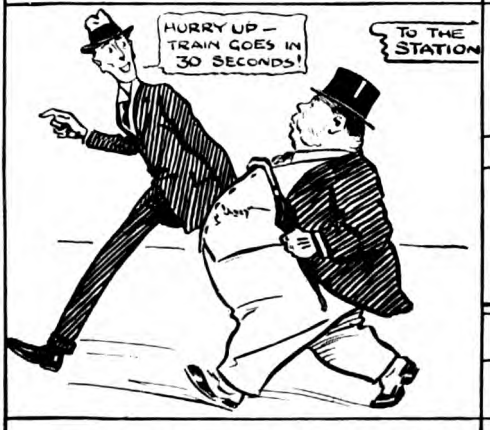
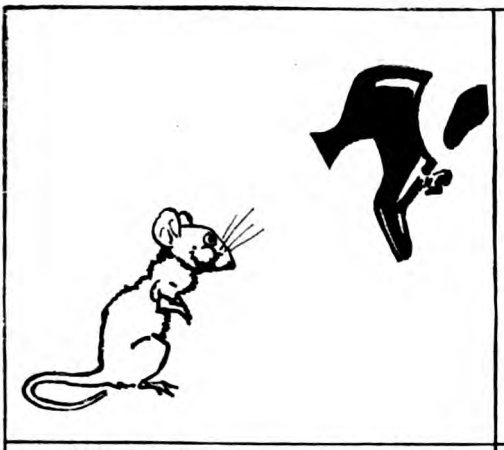


5. AN OPTIMIST AND A PESSIMIST

6. YOUR PET AVERSION

JOHN HASSALL, R.I.



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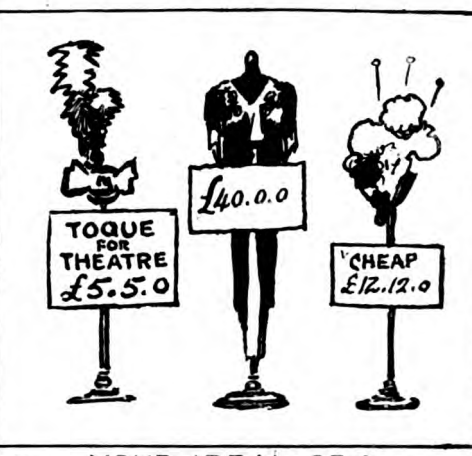
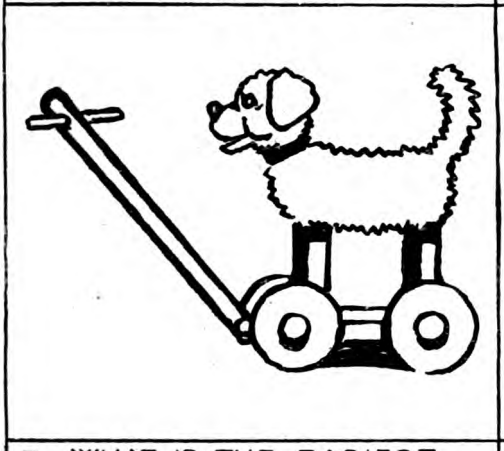


2. YOUR IDEAL OF A WELL-DRESSED WOMAN



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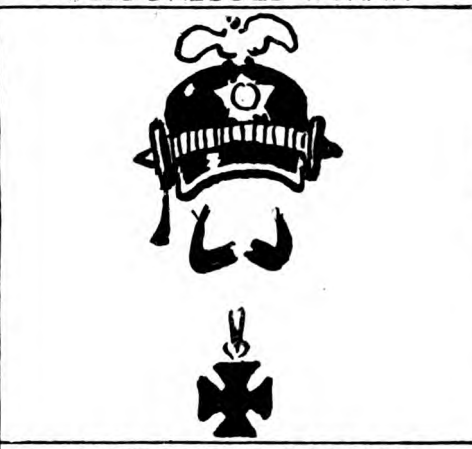


4. WHO IS THE EASIEST MAN TO CARICATURE

5. AN OPTIMIST AND A PESSIMIST

6. YOUR PET AVERSION

Cornering Mr. Cobb.

By
LLOYD OSBOURNE.

Illustrated by Lewis Baumer.

"VIOLA MADE HIS ACQUAINTANCE AT A DANCE."

LIKE the devoted brother and affectionate old bachelor uncle that I am, I was naturally at hand to meet my sister and niece on their return from St. Augustine. They had been away a long time — three or four months—and I had missed them as much as an old dog who had been left at home with the servants. They were all the family I had, and when a man is past forty and is beginning to get a little bald and grey, such ties mean more and more to him, and no acquaintance, however wide, can exactly replace them. That Kitty had been a widow for many years had helped, I suppose, to draw us closer together than is usually the case with middle-aged brothers and sisters, and if I had had a daughter I could scarcely have loved her more than I did Viola. When I saw them coming towards me in the stream of passengers, both so pretty in their different ways, and both so animated and charming, I suddenly realized how very lonely I had been without them, and what a joy it was to get them back.

In the confused kissing that followed, with an impatient porter loaded with luggage mutely urging us to expedition, I became conscious of a very tall, thin young man, whose embarrassed smile and arrested manner seemed to imply that he belonged to our party.

"Mr. Cobb," said Kitty, introducing us.

"My uncle, Mr. Williams," added Viola, in what seemed to me a kinder tone than her mother's.

I shook hands with Mr. Cobb, who murmured politely that he was delighted to meet me, though his eyes all the while were on Viola's face, and any transports my acquaintance may have occasioned him were somewhat concealed by the eager conversation he continued to carry on with her. I caught vaguely that he would be at the Fourth Avenue Hotel; that he would telephone at nine; that he would secure the opera seats as soon as he could get them; then, raising his hat, he suddenly departed in a long-legged way after his own porter, who was piling his things into a cab. I was about to ask who he was when Kitty touched me sharply with her elbow, and gave me a warning look to avoid the subject of Mr. Cobb before Viola.

Later, in the taxi, when Viola happened to mention his name, I was stupid enough to repeat my question and get a second dig in the ribs that recalled my happy infancy—in which the pokes of an elder little sister contributed so largely to my upbringing.

"A delightful young man we met at the

hotel in St. Augustine," said Viola, who, fortunately, had not detected her mother's signal to me. "Oh, Uncle Hartley, I am just crazy about Mr. Cobb, and so's Mumsey. Aren't you, Mumsey doodums?"

"Oh, yes," exclaimed Mumsey doodums, with what I thought a certain evasiveness, and an ensuing jump for a fresh topic that hurried us past Mr. Cobb and left him abandoned and forgotten—conversationally. After an absence of four months this was not difficult, especially as for these two it was a home-coming, with arrears of domestic history to be brought up to date—including the re-covering of the Sheraton sofa, Mary Ann's embroilment with the janitor, the missing vacuum nozzle, the fire next door, and other items of palpitating interest. Dinner was awaiting us in the cosy little dining-room of the apartment, and here there was more kissing and enthusiasm and general rapture at being once more under their own roof-tree.

Afterwards, when Viola left us to run upstairs and see her chum, Isobel Latimer, who had been telephoning down repeatedly, and whose impatient ringing and ringing I had found not a little irritating, I lit a cigar and drew up a chair beside that dear sister of mine.

"It's mighty good to see you back, Kitty," I said.

"Dear old boy!" she murmured, reaching out a plump hand and giving mine a squeeze. "It's been a long time, hasn't it?"

"Yes, indeed it has," I said, gazing at her affectionately.

"Hartley," she broke out, suddenly, "I am dreadfully worried."

"Worried?" I repeated, much concerned.

"It's this Mr. Cobb," she explained, colouring faintly.

"The young man who was with you at the station?"

"Yes."

"Who is he?"

Kitty sat up.

"That's what I would give anything to know," she exclaimed. "He's a man of mystery—an enigma."

"My experience with men of mystery," I observed, "is that they usually end by letting you in for their club bills or something equally expensive or disagreeable. My advice, as a bald-headed brother who has had considerable experience in this vale of tears, would be to put a large piece of distance between yourself and this enigmatic Mr. Cobb."

"You don't understand," said Kitty, helplessly. "Viola is awfully taken with him, and it would not surprise me any moment to hear that they were engaged."

"Engaged! To a man who has no antecedents! Why, Kitty, what are you saying?"

"That's why I am so worried. Hartley, it's dreadful!"

"But is she satisfied to know nothing about him? A level-headed, clear-sighted girl like Viola to take up with a perfect stranger who may be somebody's valet!"

"She's in love; they are all lunatics when they are in love; I was no better myself at her age."

I began to feel worried, too.

"Tell me all about it," I demanded. "Right from the beginning, Kitty."

"Well, there he was at the hotel, with a big yellow motor of his own, and every appearance of being a most correct and eligible young man—and when Viola made his acquaintance at a dance and seemed to take to him tremendously, I folded my hands and thought, 'Bless you, my children!' Viola is twenty-five, and of course it must happen sooner or later, mustn't it? After that they went about together all the time, and really I thought he was a most attractive fellow, and perhaps helped the affair along more than I ought. At first, quite innocently, I asked him a few questions about himself, and only realized by degrees how cleverly he slipped out of answering them. Then, when I pressed Viola about him, she flared up as girls do and almost bit my head off. They are all tiger-cats if they think you are trying to take away their young man."

"But surely she understood your natural feeling of responsibility?" I said.

"Girls in love never understand anything," she replied, with conviction. "They pay about as much attention to fathers and mothers as a runaway horse does to a shrieking driver—the more you yell the faster they run."

"If I had been you I would have traced down the person who introduced him originally—who vouched for him in the first place."

"That's precisely what I did; she was a Mrs. Gilbert, who referred me back to her husband, who referred me back—to one of the hotel clerks! Then I looked over the register, and found he came from Walton, Massachusetts."

"Well, that's all right. It will only take me at the most two or three days to get on his track——"

"But listen, Hartley, listen."

"Yes?"

"There isn't any Walton in Massachusetts."

"Are you sure, Kitty?"

"Sure? Of course I am sure! I looked it up in two different atlases. There are fifteen Waltons, but none of them in Massachusetts; and it was written quite plain—M-a-s-s."

"By George!" I exclaimed. "It does look black, doesn't it?"

"It couldn't be worse, Hartley—it simply couldn't."

"It was foolish of you not to have had it out with Viola—not to have nipped it in the bud the moment you suspected this fellow."

Kitty is a soft, round, helpless little person, and she looked softer, rounder, and more helpless than ever as I reproached her.

"I tried to," she quavered.

"Yet you allowed this man to come up with you on the train?"

"I—I couldn't help that," she whimpered, with suffusing eyes. "I couldn't stop him buying a ticket, could I?"

"You ought to have asserted yourself. Any woman—any mother—with the slightest sense and knowledge of the world would have asserted herself."

"I—I tried to," she wailed.

"Even a chicken will fight for its young," I went on, angrily. "Even a worm will fight for its wormlets, yet you meekly tolerated this scamp, this valet maybe, this possible bigamist and scoundrel, and couldn't think of doing anything more than wringing your hands."

"I—I was afraid of Viola," she gasped out, through her sobs. "She acts as though she were engaged to him, and doesn't allow me to open my mouth. It's all very well to talk about c-c-chickens, but what could I do?"

I thought for a while in silence, puffing hard at my cigar.

"He is at the Fourth Avenue Hotel," I said at last. "I'll drop in on Mr. Cobb to-morrow, and then we'll see what he has to say to the man of the family."

Kitty looked up gratefully.

"Oh, what a comfort you are, Hartley!" she exclaimed. "I was trying to nerve myself all the time to send for you, but I just couldn't. Yes, that's the best thing—for you to see him and take that attitude—the man of the family, and all that. I can't help thinking he is some dreadful kind of impostor."

"I'll know for sure to-morrow," I said. "I'll know to-morrow if I have to stand him on his head."

I judged it wiser not to telephone beforehand. Forewarning such an ambiguous young man might result in his keeping out of my way. I got to the hotel a little after midday, and made up my mind to remain there until I had cornered Mr. Cobb. On going to the desk to inquire for the number of his room, the clerk stopped me smilingly before I was half through.

"Oh, if it's Mr. Cobb you want," he said, "he is right over there in that chair."

Sure enough, there was my man, with his long legs stretched out and a neglected morning paper in his lap. Even in his careless attitude he looked a very presentable young fellow, and I noticed the excellent cut of his clothes, as well as his pleasant, unconcerned expression. I had a sudden misgiving that I might be making a fool of myself, and rapidly edited the remarks with which I had intended opening the engagement. After all, he had some right to be considered innocent until proved guilty, and it seemed better policy and infinitely more agreeable to give him the benefit of the doubt—at first, at any rate. But before going over to him I asked to have a glance at the register, and suddenly bristled with renewed suspicion as I read the entry: *Montgomery J. Cobb, Walton, Mass.*

I had already confirmed the fact that there was no Walton, Mass., and now the sight of this palpable falsehood in black and white was as stunning as a blow. Mr. Cobb certainly needed investigating.

"I beg your pardon," I began, as suavely as I was able. "I am Mr. Hartley Williams—Mrs. Trudell's brother—whom perhaps you will recall meeting last night at the station."

Mr. Cobb sprang up and shook hands with the most unruffled assurance. Indeed, assurance was evidently this young man's long suit. One might have thought he was honestly glad to see me from the way he proffered an adjoining chair and would have ordered me a drink. It was only in his eyes—those blue, rather protuberant eyes—that I could detect the least hint of discomposure.

"I am a business man," I said, "and you will excuse me if I come to the point without any preamble or beating about the bush?"

He nodded amiably.

"Circumstances demand that I should know something about you," I continued. "A frank understanding between us would help materially."

"Help what?" he inquired.

The subdued impertinence of the remark nettled me, but I managed to restrain my temper.

"You have been paying very pronounced attentions to my niece," I said. "As her

"VIOLA WAS A LEVEL-HEADED, CLEAR-SIGHTED GIRL."

uncle and guardian—and as much as I dislike this unpleasant task—it is my duty to learn something about you."

"Miss Trudell is a most charming young lady," he observed, "and while it is true I admire her, I scarcely think you are justified in calling my attentions pronounced."

"I have it from her mother," I said.

"Mrs. Trudell is a most charming lady," he went on, with the same exasperating blandness. "I would not for anything in the world cast the slightest reflection on Mrs. Trudell, whom I admire and respect, but in holding me up in this fashion she——"

"Nobody is holding you up," I interrupted, warmly. "I simply mean that a continued acquaintance is impossible unless you inform us who you are and where you come from. If you are a gentleman you can have no possible reason for withholding such information, which you ought not to put us in the position of insisting upon."

"The word 'insist' is a very disagreeable one," he said, as imperturbably as ever, shaking the ash from his cigarette.

"So is the word 'adventurer,'" I retorted, now quite angry. "A man whose only address is a non-existent town in Massachusetts has only himself to thank if he inspires a certain suspicion."

"I am forced to agree with you," he remarked, with an air of sharing my point of view, and looking long and earnestly at his brilliantly-polished shoes. "I am forced to agree with you; I admit it frankly."

"And is this how the matter is going to rest?" I demanded, after a considerable pause.

"It can rest any way it pleases," he replied, awakening from a sort of brown study. "My private affairs are my own business, and if you cannot bring yourself to take me on trust I am afraid our brief acquaintance will have to end."

"*All* our acquaintance will have to end," I said, with a marked stress on the first word. "Even my niece, I think, will appreciate the need of that."

I thought his smile wavered for a moment as his shoes again engrossed his entire attention; he was plainly uneasier than he would have me believe.

"It's too bad," he remarked, finally, in an aggrieved voice. "If I could explain I would—only the truth is, I can't."

"Then you will kindly keep away from my family until you can," I said. "A man can do without a toothbrush and he can do without socks, but he has to have antecedents."

"Well, I'll agree to one thing," he said, recovering his smiling effrontery. "I'll agree to keep away from *you* all you like."

I swallowed the insult in silence, though inwardly I was boiling. Then I rose quietly and, without raising my voice or departing from an ordinary conversational tone, said: "You have told me very little, but I have learned all I want to know. You are evidently a sharper and a rascal, and if you continue this impudent courtship of my niece I shall take some very effectual means to squelch you. Good day, sir, good day!"

With that I turned on my heel and left him, with a disconcerting sense of having got the worst of it.

That feeling increased during the next few days, when I heard he was a constant caller at Kitty's apartment, and that Viola and he were going out together almost every afternoon or evening. Protesting to Kitty seemed absolutely useless; she would agree to everything I said, and then do nothing; I would put words into her mouth to say to Mr. Cobb, and then, when he came, she dared not say them. She seemed to think that by treating him coldly and occasionally leaving the room when he arrived she was doing the utmost that lay in a mother's power. I gathered, however, that she had had some violent passages with Viola in private, with no results save sullenness and resentment.

When I suggested she should definitely close her door against Mr. Cobb she dissolved into tears and had to have smelling-salts held to her nose.

Viola, who knew mighty well what I thought about it all, showed a remarkable adroitness in eluding me. She was always just going out, or having a letter to write, or a pressing engagement with Isobel Latimer whenever I tried to pin her down for that lecture she was so plainly dreading. One day, after a week had gone by in this manner, I lost all patience with her. As she was about to flutter away in a whirlwind of animation and excuses, I put my back to the door and smilingly held her prisoner.

"We have to have a talk about Mr. Cobb," I said, "and we are going to have it now."

"Oh, but, Uncle Hartley," she pleaded, "I can't, I can't! I haven't a moment to spare—truly I haven't. I have a dress-fitting at Estelle's, and I am already ten minutes late."

"I am a week late," I said. "A week late trying to see you, and always getting put off. For once your engagements will have to give way to the claims of a wild and

woolly uncle. I've got a lot to say, and you've got a lot to hear."

Appreciating that I was in earnest, and realizing my determination not to let her escape, she sat down, but with a flash of her eyes and a mutinous tightening of her lips that boded ill for my long-deferred interview. She was a pretty girl in her way, with masses of fair hair and a trim, nice figure; I had always credited her with an affectionate disposition as well until I ventured to lay hands on Mr. Cobb. It is astonishing how these yielding, submissive young things can suddenly reveal themselves as grown-up and determined women whenever their hearts are engaged.

"Let's get it over with," she said, fidgeting in her seat. "As my uncle, you think you have a right to roar about Mr. Cobb. Well—roar!"

"Come, come, my dear," I protested. "Try to be polite, even if we don't agree about Mr. Cobb. Even an uncle is entitled to some of the elementary courtesies."

"Oh, I hate to have him insulted," she exclaimed, a shade apologetically. "You are all against him, and it is so aggravating to know what you are going to say before you have said it."

"I am not so sure you do," I retorted. "I may be middle-aged and commonplace, but I'm not quite a parrot. Anyway, my dear, when one loves people one is entitled to be a little—officious."

"Oh, you are not that, Uncle Hartley," she said, relentingly. "I've been horrid and rude, and I beg your pardon. But both you and Mumsey are so prejudiced against poor Mr. Cobb."

"I am not prejudiced against poor Mr. Cobb," I protested. "I like him well enough, and I think he is a very presentable young man; but if he insists on being a young man of mystery, whose fault is it that we distrust him? Oughtn't you to blame him rather than me?"

"I PUT MY BACK TO THE DOOR AND SMILINGLY HELD HER PRISONER."

"Perhaps I ought," she admitted.

"My dear, he convicts himself," I said.

"And you think I'm an awful little fool, don't you?" she remarked, with the first glimmer of a smile.

"No," I answered; "you are simply young—young and trustful, as a nice girl ought to be. But that is all the more reason to listen to the watch-dog's honest bark."

"I'm listening," she said.

"Bark number one," I continued: "Tell Mr. Cobb you have a horrid, disagreeable old uncle who makes your life a burden to you with questions you cannot answer. Tell him you are at your wits' end to satisfy this old ogre. Then if he is straight——"

"Of course he is straight," she interrupted, with another

little flare of resentment. "Mr. Cobb is a gentleman through and through, and——"

"And what?" I asked, as she hesitated and stopped.

"He has his own reasons—very good reasons—for hiding his real name, and——"

"Good heavens!" I cried out. "You mean to say he isn't named Cobb at all?"

"No," she replied. "It is all part of a very strange and romantic secret. You see, he is liable to be arrested at any moment!"

My look of consternation was more effective than all my previous reproaches.

"I promised never to tell a soul," she hurried on, as though apprehending some outburst on my part, and feverishly eager to forestall it. "But, of course, that meant Mumsey, who couldn't be expected to understand or—or make allowances. I can't have you think he is a criminal, Uncle Hartley, or anything of that sort. He's a gun-runner."

"A what?" I demanded.

"That's what they call people who run guns across the Mexican border to the rebels," she explained, sweetly. "It is terribly dangerous, but very, very profitable, and he was making lots of money until finally the Federal authorities at El Paso got after him and issued a warrant for his arrest. His real name is Marion Joyce Carlisle, but he changed it to Montgomery J. Cobb for his initials on his things—to keep them the same, you know. If he were arrested he would get into the most frightful trouble, though he says in a year or two it will all blow over. But in the meantime, of course, he is in a very false position—he realizes that keenly."

"He certainly couldn't be in a worse," I said, as crossly as I felt. "But if there is a word of truth in this egregious story, why doesn't he get away to Canada, where he would be safe?"

Viola coloured faintly. "He would rather stay here," she replied, in some confusion. "Nearer to me—and all that, you know."

"WITH THAT PARTING SHOT I LEFT, AFTER A PECK AT A VERY AVERTED CHEEK."

"Oh!" I murmured. "So that's why he stays, is it?"

"Yes, that's why he stays," said Viola, as though pleased at last to find something we could agree on.

"But tell me, what was he before he took up this highly spectacular, moving-picture occupation?" I inquired. "He can't have spent his whole life in gun-running. What was he before he—gun-ran?"

The tinge in Viola's cheeks turned to scarlet.

"I—I don't know," she replied. "He's always been rather reticent about himself, and n-naturally I never liked to p-p-press him."

"Viola," I exclaimed, "you must drop this man like a red-hot potato."

"I can't," she murmured; "or, rather, I mean I won't. I may as well confess that we are engaged."

"Engaged!" I cried out, aghast. "Engaged to a man with an *alias*, no antecedents, and escaping from the police?"

"Yes," she returned, somewhat tremblingly, "and if you bother or harass him, or draw Mumsey into any fuss about him, I warn you it will be a very short engagement. Otherwise we intend to wait until the hue and cry is over—until the rebels become Federals, and all danger is past."

I rose and took my hat and cane.

"You are twenty-five years old and legally entitled to go to the devil," I said. "Only if I were you I would make a little surer that this gentleman isn't married already. It wouldn't be very pleasant if he were, would it?"

With that parting shot I left, after a peck at a very averted cheek. It was a hollow formality in the present instance, but I observed it dutifully. It is always well to maintain the amenities of life even in moments of extreme tension.

I doubt if there is a more detestable position in the world than being related—closely related—to a young woman who is making

an idiot of herself. One feels so responsible and so helpless ; she is too big to spank and too unreasonable to argue with ; legally she is a woman, and in reality a child. It is no pleasure, either, to become the cruel uncle of romance ; to realize that one is regarded as a horrid old busybody who has no understanding of youth and love. I was very much upset ; very much perplexed—exceedingly chagrined and horrified. It is a terrible thing to look on and see a girl's life ruined.

Of course, if my sister had been a different sort of woman I would have regarded all this as much more her affair than mine. But Kitty is one of those impossible people who fly off at a tangent in anything like a crisis, and meet it by creating another—with unlimited tears, hysterics, and heart failure. You have to run from the crisis to take care of Kitty, and then from Kitty to take care of the crisis. Besides, I felt that the least interference with Viola just now would be fatal ; one little push, and she would disappear in the direction of the City Hall, to reappear as Mrs. Cobb. Decidedly I had to grapple with this ticklish situation alone if it were to be grappled with at all. But how ? I asked myself that all night. How—and again how ?

The next morning I decided to consult a private detective I knew named Bloomer. We had once employed him to stop a series of petty thefts in our warehouse, and he had nailed the culprits in thirty-six hours. So, after telephoning for an appointment, I went along to Bloomer and unfolded my tale of woe in a dingy office overlooking Broadway. Bloomer was a grizzled, bovine personage, remotely policeman-like and Irish, with smouldering eyes and a cowing manner. There was no unnecessary suavity about Bloomer ; no airs or graces ; he was massively manly, and as direct as a falling brick. But he listened with hard-breathing patience ; took notes in a large, greasy book, and asked a number of very searching questions.

" The fellow's a crook," he said, at last, in his booming voice. " The idea is to get the goods on him and run him out—scare him out. Hey, is that right ? "

I said it was. Yes, that was it exactly.

" It can be done slow or fast," he went on. " Slow's cheap and fast's dear—which is it to be ? "

" I want results," I said, " and the quicker the better. Money is no object if you can get results."

" I'll get them," he declared, with a robust assurance that shook the office. " But understand, it means a lot of telegraphing, a lot of oiling of police ropes, a lot of money flung away here, there, and everywhere. Detective work is just like fishing, Mr. Williams—the bigger your net the surer you are of landing your fish, and the cost is in proportion."

" Go ahead," I said. " Show me results, and I don't care what I pay."

A shade of misgiving suddenly appeared on those bovine features.

" Of course, I don't guarantee he's a crook," he remarked. " If he ain't a crook, he ain't, and there's no more to be said. But I take it it's his record you're wanting, even if it's clean ? "

" Precisely," I agreed.

" Where will you be by five o'clock ? " he asked, reaching for some telegraph forms. " I think I ought to be able to report something by five."

" At my club," I returned, giving him the telephone number. " I shall make a point of being there from four-thirty on."

He had already noted my hotel and business address, and now verified them again with an air of concluding the interview. I liked him all the better for this directness, and hastened to take my departure. He escorted me to the door, massively and ceremoniously, and a party of chattering girls, descending from a theatrical agency above, were very much impressed by the sight. We passed out into the street together, and here I stopped and looked up at the dusty windows wherewithin the web was being stretched for Cobb. I glowed with satisfaction ; I felt that the wires were already humming ; best of all, it was my affair no longer, but Bloomer's.

He rang me up a little after five.

" I've got some queer news for you," he said. " There ain't any such party known at El Paso, nor is there any warrant out for him."

" No ? " I exclaimed.

" Whatever our party is running away from, it certainly ain't from a Federal warrant," he continued. " There ain't a warrant, Federal, State, or local, out for anybody—for smuggling arms, d'ye understand ? Hey, have you got that ? "

I replied that I had.

" It looks like a blind," went on Bloomer, in his vibrating voice. " Nearly all crooks have blinds to throw off the police. Meantime, of course, I have been trying to place the Walton our party mentioned—the town he gave on the hotel register, both here and

down South. Well, and what do you think?"

I murmured my inability to do anything of the kind.

"I have covered them all, and there ain't one where our party is known," resumed Bloomer. "Our party, either as Cobb or Carlisle, or Marion, Montgomery, or Joyce, ain't to be found or recognized in any of them."

"Perhaps my description of him wasn't good enough," I said, suddenly troubled that the fault might be mine. "I am afraid it would have been better if you had seen him yourself."

Bloomer burst out laughing.

"I guess we know pretty well what he looks like after shadowing him all day," he exclaimed. "Why, you weren't gone ten minutes before I had him under observation, with one of my best men reporting progress every hour. And here's another mighty queer thing, Mr. Williams."

"Yes?"

"It ain't guns he's interested in—it's *furs*."

"Furs?"

"Yes, sir, *furs!* We trailed him to Efferts and Co., furriers; to W. H. Hall and Co., furriers; to Papillon Frères, furriers. At the last place he stayed a long time, and then took one of the salesmen out to lunch and spent nine dollars and forty-five cents on him at Martanne's. Afterwards he strolled along Fifth Avenue and across Thirty-fourth Street to the department stores, stopping at every window where there were *furs*."

I expressed my astonishment, though not as emphatically, perhaps, as Bloomer seemed to desire. It was stealing over me that all this, however interesting, led us nowhere, and might be one of the tricks of a notoriously tricky profession. That afternoon my partner had frankly warned me against employing detectives; their whole scheme, he said, was to lead you on and on, justifying heavy expenses by long reports of what had never taken place. I was impelled to hint this to Bloomer.

"But this is all negative," I said. "We are still as much in the dark as ever, aren't we?"

Bloomer laughed confidently.

"Listen!" he boomed, with a jubilant note in his voice that dispelled my latent suspicion. "I was wondering about these here furs, and seeing no daylight anywhere, when, kerplunk, I got another line on our party that put him right under the searchlight. I can't be absolutely positive till Chicago rings me up in twenty minutes, but it's dollars to doughnuts, Mr. Williams, that we've landed our man. He's Harold Spindler, twenty-eight, married, formerly assistant cashier of the Grangers' and Drovers' Bank, now a fugitive from justice, and wanted for forgery and embezzlement. There is a thousand dollars reward for his apprehension, and as soon as we get in touch with the officers, who think they have tracked him to Duluth, they'll be sent on here to arrest and extradite him."

This was thrilling. I had a sudden strangling feeling in my throat. We always think of crime as something inconceivably remote from our commonplace, everyday life, and when it brushes against us, concretely and individually, we are stunned.

"There's Chicago calling now on my other wire," exclaimed Bloomer, suddenly. "Hey, hang up a moment—I'll ring you up again as soon as they are done."

A few minutes later, as I waited nervously beside the switchboard operator, I was called again into the booth. It was Bloomer, resounding and triumphant.

"He's our party all right," he announced. "He's Harold Spindler for sure, and the officers will be here to-morrow with the warrant, requisition papers, and finger-prints! Good work, hey? No time wasted, hey? Cobb's a smart boy, but I guess he's cornered this time, Mr. Williams."

I had hardly breath enough to ask him to keep the affair out of the newspapers.

"Sure, it will be kept out of the papers," said Bloomer. "The young lady's name has to be protected; I know that."

"Where is he now?" I asked. "Where's Cobb now?"

"Up at your sister's apartment," said Bloomer, answering my question with a certain uneasiness. "But don't you disturb him, Mr. Williams; keep away from him, please; he'll run at the fall of a hat, and then where would we be?"

I murmured non-committally that I would be very careful. It was beginning to dawn on me that Bloomer and I were at cross purposes as to Cobb's final fate. I had no wish whatever to have the fellow arrested, since his name could only too easily be linked with Viola's in an odious publicity. I wished for nothing better, in fact, than his complete disappearance and obliteration. But Bloomer was so much a policeman himself that I felt he would be acutely put out to fail his brother officers from Chicago. Besides, there was that thousand dollars reward, in which, no doubt, my burly friend expected to share.

My increasing perception of all this caused me to temporize.

After a word or two of sincere appreciation for his services, now so splendidly concluded, I said good night and left the booth. Once outside, I hurriedly called up a taxi and gave the chauffeur Kitty's address. Cobb's knell had sounded; his vile masquerade was nearing its end; vengeance, in a very stuffy red box, was swiftly moving in his direction to overtake and crush him.

The maid wanted to help me off with my overcoat, but I pushed her aside and strode into the sitting-room just as I was.

The first person I saw was Cobb himself, seated beside Viola on the sofa, very lover-like and close. A little farther off was Kitty in a rocking-chair, with some embroidery and several brightly-coloured balls of silk in her lap. At my startling entry they all looked up, and there was an electrifying instant as we stared at one another without a word being said.

I advanced on Cobb with my finger outstretched.

"I know who you are!" I thundered. "I've had detectives on your trail and we've run down your infamous secret. Get out of here, you cur—get out!"

One might have thought the two women turned to stone; I doubt if they even breathed. As for Cobb, he flushed as red as fire, and his face was a picture of rage and mortification. I expected him to slink away in silence, but instead he had the effrontery to remain where he was, staring back at me furiously.

"You ought to have your nose pulled for making a scene before ladies," he exclaimed, with incredible impudence. "As for my secret, I was just nerving myself to tell it when you burst in like a cyclone."

"I'll tell it for you," I cried, incensed beyond measure. "I'll tell them what you are in plain English."

"Go ahead," he retorted, cringing a little in spite of his bold words. And then he added, with a nervous giggle: "Go ahead—a man can only die once."

"Viola," I said, in an intonation that would have cut ham, "let me present Mr. Harold Spindler, of Chicago, a young married man, who is wanted by the police for forgery and embezzlement!"

One might have expected the women to scream or something, but they remained as stricken as before—as motionless and silent as two statues. It was Cobb who made all the noise.

"That's a lie!" he shouted, springing to his feet. "That's an outrageous, wicked lie! I'm not married, and I'm not Harold Spindler, and I never stole a cent in my life!"

"Oh, what's the use of all this stage-play?" I said, quietly. "You know you are cornered, Cobb; you know the game's up; the officers will be here to-morrow with the warrant and extradition papers."

He uttered a sort of groan, and sank down on the sofa again.

"I am not Harold What-d'ye-call-um," he protested. "I'm not—I'm not!"

"Then kindly condescend to inform us who you are," I said, with all the sarcasm at my command.

"Uncle Hartley, you know yourself his real name is Carlisle," Viola burst out at me, in panting resentment. "He was mixed up in the Mexican rebellion—with running guns across the border, and you are horribly unjust and unkind to——"

"Every word of that is a lie," I interrupted. "Lie on lie, and lie on top of that."

With flashing eyes Viola turned to Cobb for his denial, but all he did was to quail and hang his head.

"It wasn't true," he admitted at last, still unable to meet her championing glance. "I am not named Carlisle, and I never saw a Mexican in my life."

I felt sorry for Viola. She reeled as though she had been struck in the face.

"I—I believed in you, Monty," she quavered; "b-b-but now I don't know what to think."

"He's Harold Spindler!" I cried. "I know he is Harold Spindler!"

"Call me that again and I'll choke you!" he snapped at me, as though goaded beyond endurance. "I am not Harold Spindler, and to-morrow your officers will look like a pack of fools. The real trouble with me is—my business; no nice girl could stoop to marry a man of—my business. That's what drove me to all these wretched falsehoods, knowing that the truth would cost me the girl I love."

"The truth never could do that," exclaimed Viola, passionately. "It's lies that kill love. If you have a spark of manhood in you, tell me your real name."

"It's Montgomery Joyce Cobb," he replied, almost sulkily. "But it's not my name that matters, it is—my business. I had to hide that; I was forced to hide it. I kept saying to myself, 'Win her first and then tell her afterwards.' Every day that I've been here I've tried to bring myself to tell you, but I couldn't, Viola—I just couldn't."

"If it is honest I don't mind what it is," she said, with a suddenly reviving confidence. "I wouldn't care what my husband did as long as he was upright and honourable."

"You think so now," he said, wearily; "but——"

"I'll always think so," she interrupted.

But Cobb still hesitated.

"I won't tie you to that," he murmured. "It would not be manly or right to hold you to that. Tell me to go—and I'll go without a word."

"Your business is robbing banks," I put in.

"For shame, Uncle Hartley!" exclaimed Viola. "Poor Mr. Cobb is going to tell us everything, and then you will feel like going down on your bended knees. His fault is simply being over-sensitive and over-honourable."

"If I were a starving doctor nobody would ever point a finger at me," Cobb said, in a tone of grateful agreement with Viola, to whom he turned as though Kitty and I had ceased to exist. "If I were a shabby, baggy-kneed lawyer or a third-class schoolmaster out of a job, I would have a sort of social position, if I had nothing else. But because I struck out for myself in a fresh field—made a go of a thing that has always been thought impossible—I am exposed to the cruellest jeers and insults. I have to hide my business as though it were a crime; I daren't mention or allude to it; though I am a college graduate and make twenty thousand dollars a year, people sniff at me and shut their doors in my face."

"For Heaven's sake, what is your business?" Viola cried.

"Robbing banks," I interjected.

"This is what I have earned by my superior initiative and enterprise," continued Cobb, despairingly. "That is my reward for blazing a new trail; that's the life I have to offer the woman who becomes my wife. Viola, I ask you again, can you stoop to marry an—outcast?"

"SHE LAUGHED TILL THE TEARS CAME.

I think Viola's pause was more due to dramatic effect than to any real hesitation. It certainly gave a superb value to her avowal when it came.

"Yes—if I loved him," she said.

Instead of brightening at this, Cobb seemed only to grow more woebegone. One could see that he was struggling with that impending revelation; the unsaid words were seeking

utterance; suddenly—gaspingly—they were born.

"I raise skunks," he said.

"Skunks?" I exclaimed.

"Skunks?" cried Viola.

"Skunks?" bleated Kitty.

"Yes, skunks," repeated Cobb, almost defiantly. "I am the only successful skunk-raiser on the American continent; my skunk farm in Sullivan County is the only place

MEANWHILE COBB SAT THERE SCOWLING."

where skunks were ever raised on a large scale in captivity. I am—why should I not claim my unfortunate distinction?—I am the Skunk King!"

For a moment we remained spell-bound, and then, with one common, irresistible impulse, we began to laugh as I believe no three people ever laughed before. The relief, the reaction, the awful feeling that we shouldn't—only added to our convulsions of mirth. Viola was the worst of us all; she simply could not control herself; she laughed till the tears came. Meanwhile Cobb sat there scowling, and so injured-looking and humiliated that the sight of him impelled us to fresh outbursts. We knew we were committing an enormity, and the more we knew it the more we laughed.

"You were right not to tell me before," said Viola at last, breathlessly struggling to console the dejected young man. "At the beginning I don't think I could have stood it, Monty. Girls are so silly and high-flown, and——"

"But now?" he pleaded, interrupting her with an intensity in his voice that made me feel for him. "Does this let me out, Viola?"

"You darling boy, of course it doesn't!" she exclaimed. "I was only laughing because I was so pleased it wasn't worse. Why, we'll go off and raise skunks together, and live happily ever afterwards."

Cobb beamed.

"They are the nicest, cleanest, friendliest little creatures in the world," he said, enthusiastically. Then, looking at me rather significantly, he added: "In fact, the more I see of people, the better I like skunks."

Before I realized what he was doing, he was suddenly emptying all his pockets of letters, bills, memoranda, and what not, and accumulating a thick little packet, which I was astonished to have passed to me.

"I am no Dr. Cook in this skunk business," he declared. "Read these, and satisfy yourself that I am all right. It is my last five days' correspondence, and there isn't a letter that isn't full of skunk."

"Oh, I am quite reassured about you," I said, accepting them with some demur. "It is plain as a pikestaff that you aren't Harold Spindler, and these proofs are superfluous."

"Uncle Hartley was only trying to protect me, Monty," said Viola, softly, aside to him. "You must not bear him any ill-will. Shake hands with him, like a dear fellow, and let bygones be bygones."

We did so cordially. It was fine of him after all the things I had said, and my heart went out to him. Then I kissed Viola and Cobb kissed Kitty, and then I kissed Kitty and Cobb kissed Viola; and we all glowed and felt very red and self-conscious, as an American family always does when emotion has betrayed it out of its usual reserve.

We owed it to Kitty that the ensuing constraint was broken.

"I'll have to change all my ideas about skunks," she remarked, naively. "Well, well, to think we are going to marry into them!"

Some New Discoveries in Natural History.

By JOHN J. WARD, F.E.S.

Author of "Insect Biographies with Pen and Camera," "Life Histories of Familiar Plants," etc.
Illustrated with Original Photographs by the Author.

IV.—The Duel of the Male Sticklebacks.

THERE is perhaps no more interesting creature in the pond than the three-spined stickleback. Many stories of its doings below water have been told, some accurate and many inaccurate, but never before, I think, has a photographic record of the fighting propensities of the gaudily-dressed male fishes been put before the public. It is largely for this reason that I have introduced this subject under the general heading of these Nature glimpses. The photographs introduce the subject in a new light, and what I have recorded of their doings, while, perhaps, I may not claim it wholly as a new discovery, yet I may have added some interesting details not generally known; for it is a fact that the naturalist who lays himself out to record the doings of wild life by means of a camera almost invariably learns more of the habits and peculiar characteristics of the creatures than the mere observer does.

The three-spined stickleback is the famous "tiddler" of the young disciples of Izaak Walton who go forth to attack their quarry with a stick, a piece of cotton, a worm, and a strung-up jam jar. The red-breasted "robins" of their captures are the males.

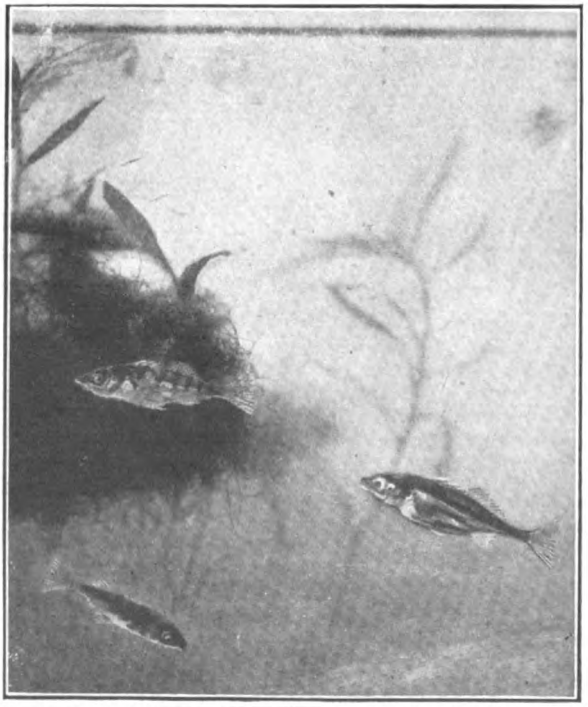


Fig. 1.—On the left is a male stickleback guarding its nest hidden amongst the weeds. Below is the lady stickleback being invited to the nest. On the right a rival male has appeared.

Now the real excitement in stickleback life commences in the spawning season. Then there are pugnacious males in glowing colours who appear to have no nest of their own, and who are ever ready for a battle with another male that does possess one; for it is the males who build and take charge of the nests. Also there are bands of marauding females that are always looking for an opportunity to attack an undefended

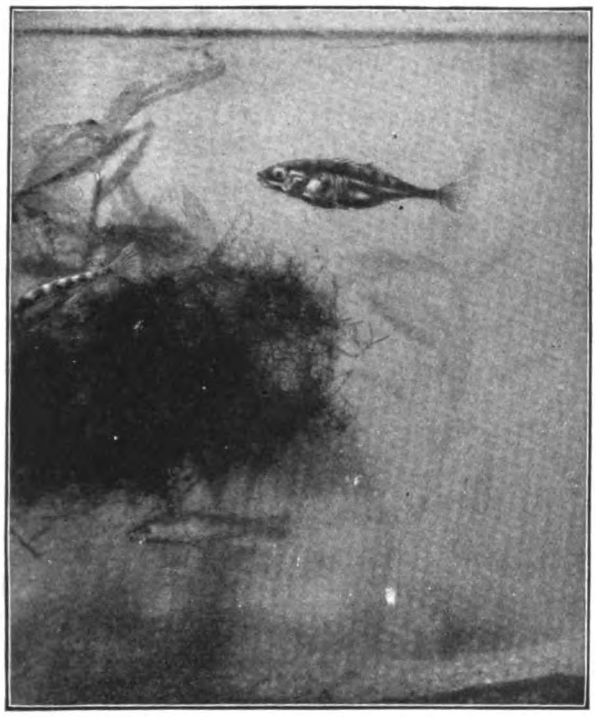


Fig. 2.—Like a flash of light the owner of the nest charges his approaching rival, attacking him beneath with his sharp back-spines and hurling him well above the nest. The tail portion of the owner is seen on the left turning after the charge. Below, the lady stickleback is excitedly dashing round the nest, and, consequently, looks shadowy in the photograph.

nest and pull it to pieces and devour the eggs or young fry which it contains, in which work the wandering males will sometimes join them. Probably it is this cannibalistic trait which accounts for these numerous raiding sticklebacks, for when a nest is broken down the owner for the time being joins the raiders. Later on he may select a new site and settle down to family-rearing again, but for some time before doing so he is well occupied in warning off inquisitive visitors that come to inquire into his business.

After he has shown his prowess in defending his selected site from attack, and become recognized as a danger in the neighbourhood, he is only occasionally disturbed, and on such occasions he becomes extremely ferocious, especially as his nest nears completion; for it is then that the marauding visitors become more troublesome—probably in anticipation of eggs.

The nest itself is usually well hidden amongst the weeds, and is composed of particles of water-plants which he cements together by means of a secretion, and hammers into shape by means of his head. When it is completed he becomes not only more courageous than ever, but also more gaudily dressed. His crimson hues glow like brilliant fire as he continually exposes them to the sunlight while guarding his home. He has now to woo a lady stickleback, and there is little doubt that he feels himself a fine fellow in his uniform of silver, blue, and crimson.

Presently he becomes very excited. It is obvious that he has detected something coming into his domains. Yes, it is a solitary lady stickleback who has coyly approached! Round the nest he dashes at top speed. His delight is apparent. That he is most

Fig. 3.—The owner of the nest was instantly back on guard again after the charge, while the lady stickleback came to rest beneath the nest as if delighted with the victory of its owner. The rival male is seen above, drifting away.

anxious that his wonderful nest should not be overlooked by his visitor is equally apparent, for he plunges into it and backs out of it again with marvellous rapidity. The lady stickleback, however, only stands by with fins waving while she watches his movements.

Then he tries the effect of his wonderful colours upon her, swimming round her time after time as if to fascinate her with his gorgeous hues as they reflect the light.

Still she remains resting on waving fins. Slowly he comes to rest in front of her, his jewel-like eyes fixed upon her. Then, after a pause, he darts forward and bunts the side of her body with his nose, immediately returning to his nest (Fig. 1). Still she remains obdurate.

Suddenly however, she darts aside. In an instant the owner of the nest is alert, and not a moment too soon. A raiding male was making a plunge for the unprotected nest. Like a flash of light the owner of the nest met his charge, striking with his erect dorsal spines full beneath the soft part of his rival's body. How he turned his body and got in his thrust in time was simply marvellous. There was for the moment a confused flashing of silver, blue, and crimson, and an instant later the rival male was seen drifting in a helpless manner to one side of the nest, wounded and crestfallen, while the excited owner was furiously dashing round his nest, and immediately beneath him was the lady stickleback even more excited than he was (Fig. 2).

Almost instantly was he on guard again at the entrance to the nest, his colours more brilliant than ever with the glow of victory, while the lady stickleback slowly came to rest almost immediately beneath (Fig. 3).

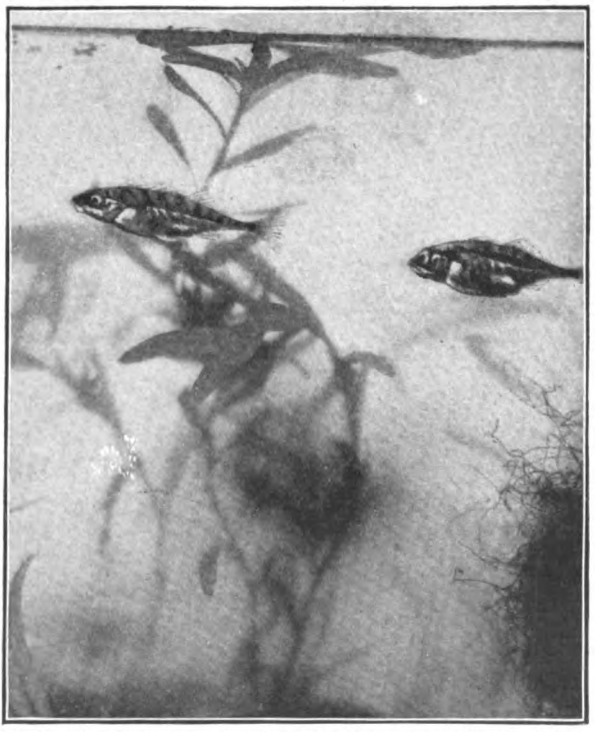


Fig. 4.—The victor then made a dash round his nesting site for a final thrust at his retreating rival. Here he is seen on the opposite side of his nest, leaving his rival on the right.

Meanwhile the wounded rival was drifting quietly away with colours paled considerably.

As if not quite satisfied that his rival was well beaten, the victor then left his post for a hurried dash in search of him, and in Fig. 4 he is seen on the opposite side of the nest returning from a last thrust at his retreating foe.

Before he returned the lady stickleback had darted into his nest, and when he arrived it was to discover that she was placing eggs therein. The brave fellow had wooed, fought, and won!

For many days afterwards that stickleback wooed other ladies of his species and induced them to assist in stocking his nest with eggs until it was full. Then he still more vigilantly guarded the entrance, continually sending through the nest (which is open at both ends) a flow of fresh water by means of the movements of his pectoral fins. Later, when the young fry appeared, he gave diligent attention to them, never failing to catch them in his mouth and rush them back to the nesting area when raiders and marauders were approaching. His greatest enemies during the egg and young fry stages are, strange to relate, the females of his own species, with whom he is in continual combat. Perhaps that is the explanation of why the male stickleback takes charge of the nest and young. The females may have developed the pernicious habit (common in many animals) of destroying their own offspring, while the males may have acquired protective characteristics and saved the race from destruction. How efficiently they perform their duties in this field is obvious enough by the huge families which are reared—in spite of the annular depletion by "tiddler sportsmen."

The Exiles

by

PERCEVAL GIBBON

Illustrated by

GERALD LEAKE R.B.A.

IN the inner office a single electric-light bulb hung over the desk at which the manager was putting an end to the day's business. As the firm's foreign correspondent entered he looked up impatiently, his face broad and intent under the light.

"Well?" he demanded.

The tall, elderly clerk, his hat in his hand, made his request briefly, presenting it, it seemed, like one asking a mere courtesy, with no urgency of manner or tone. The manager kept his hard eyes on him till he had finished; then shook his head.

"Sorry," he said, reaching for the ink-well with his pen; "sorry, Mr. Palmer; can't do it. 'Tisn't customary to let clerks draw salary in advance; in fact, there's a rule against it. We lost by it once."

The Count Palmaria made him a little bow. "I did not know there was a rule," he said.

The manager had returned to his work, and did not look up again. "You know now, anyhow," he replied, shortly. "Good night."

"Good night," returned the foreign correspondent, politely, and withdrew.

He was not greatly disappointed, for the habit of years had saved him from building on hopes. But his need of money was not the less for that; it made a problem that dwelt continually in his thoughts and deepened a little his customary gravity. It was the only expression he gave to the trouble that preoccupied him; for the rest, his thin, ivory-hued face, clean-shaven and aquiline, preserved its manner of courtesy and distinction. He passed on his homeward way through the thronged evening streets of the City, as though he stood aloof, above, and apart from their hurrying vivacity, he alone composed and deliberate in the currents of the pavement. It was all that remained to him from the days of his greatness, that little air that separated him from those among whom he worked and gained his wage.

The hour that returned him from the City to Mortlake was generally an hour of refreshment with the Count. The grubby suburban street had the appeal of familiarity for him, and here and there were faces that he knew. But on this evening the money trouble continued with him; he failed to see the policeman who saluted him or the nod of the grocer at his door. His way took him to that range of forlorn houses by the river, houses of pretensions, some of them, spacious and splendid, shut in by mean streets.

It was one of these that the Count entered, letting himself in with a latch-key. The door opened into a great, bare hall, with stone flags underfoot, where the echo of his footsteps ran before him. The sound of his entrance roused somebody up the stairs; a voice called to him over the winding banisters.

"Is that you, Palmaria?" it inquired.

"It is I," answered the Count. "I am coming up."

He laid aside his hat and went upstairs, plucking absently at his gloves. The well

of the staircase rose clear to the roof of the house, where a dome of dull glass crowned it; through it the light filtered scantily, hardly disturbing the ancient shadows of the place, and softening its bareness and shabbiness. Everything was spacious and fine in its proportions; even the stillness on which his steps intruded was like a studied effect of stateliness and solemnity. A door stood ajar on a landing, and the Count tapped at it with his knuckles.

"Come in," called the inmate.

A stout man in shirt and trousers nodded to him as he entered, smiling at him under a bristling white moustache.

"No luck, I suppose?" inquired the stout man. His voice seemed to rumble in his chest as he spoke. "Sit on the bed while I shave, and tell me about it."

The Count sat down on the iron bedstead, which was the chief article of furniture in the room.

"No luck at all," he answered, with a tone of weariness in his voice. "I asked to be allowed to receive some of my salary in advance. But there was a rule against it. And you, Colonel?"

The Colonel was stropping his razor. He paused to laugh shortly. "I got a sovereign," he answered. "The head master made me a speech about it. 'I cannot consider an advance, sergeant,' he said; 'but I will lend you a pound and will withhold your fee until it is repaid.' I saluted and got the pound."

The Count shook his head thoughtfully, leaning forward with his hands between his knees.

"One would have courage, if one dared," he said, with a sigh. "It is curious, too. Here are five of us, five men of a kind that cannot be common, even in this strange country—men of birth and culture, with a great and sacred duty to spur our powers. And yet we cannot raise a hundred pounds between us, even in our necessity."

The Colonel's broad back was towards him.

"There is a week yet," he said, without turning.

The Count sighed. "Yes," he agreed. "There is a week yet. One must have hope." He paused. "You have seen her to-day?" he asked, presently.

"Who? The Princess?" asked the Colonel, mumbling through a beard of lather. "Yes; she sent for me when I came in—her window was stuck—wouldn't shut. The doctor says she's no better."

"No better, eh?" repeated the Count.

"No." The Colonel frowned. "And we're to be very careful; anything might do great harm, he says."

"I see." The Count pondered. "Well," he said, "we've a week before us; we must get money in that time, somehow. She'd never live through it if bailiffs came in. Sometimes I almost wish she had died last winter."

"Eh?" The Colonel stared at him. "Oh, no, you don't!" he said. "You never wish that, Palmaria. I know better."

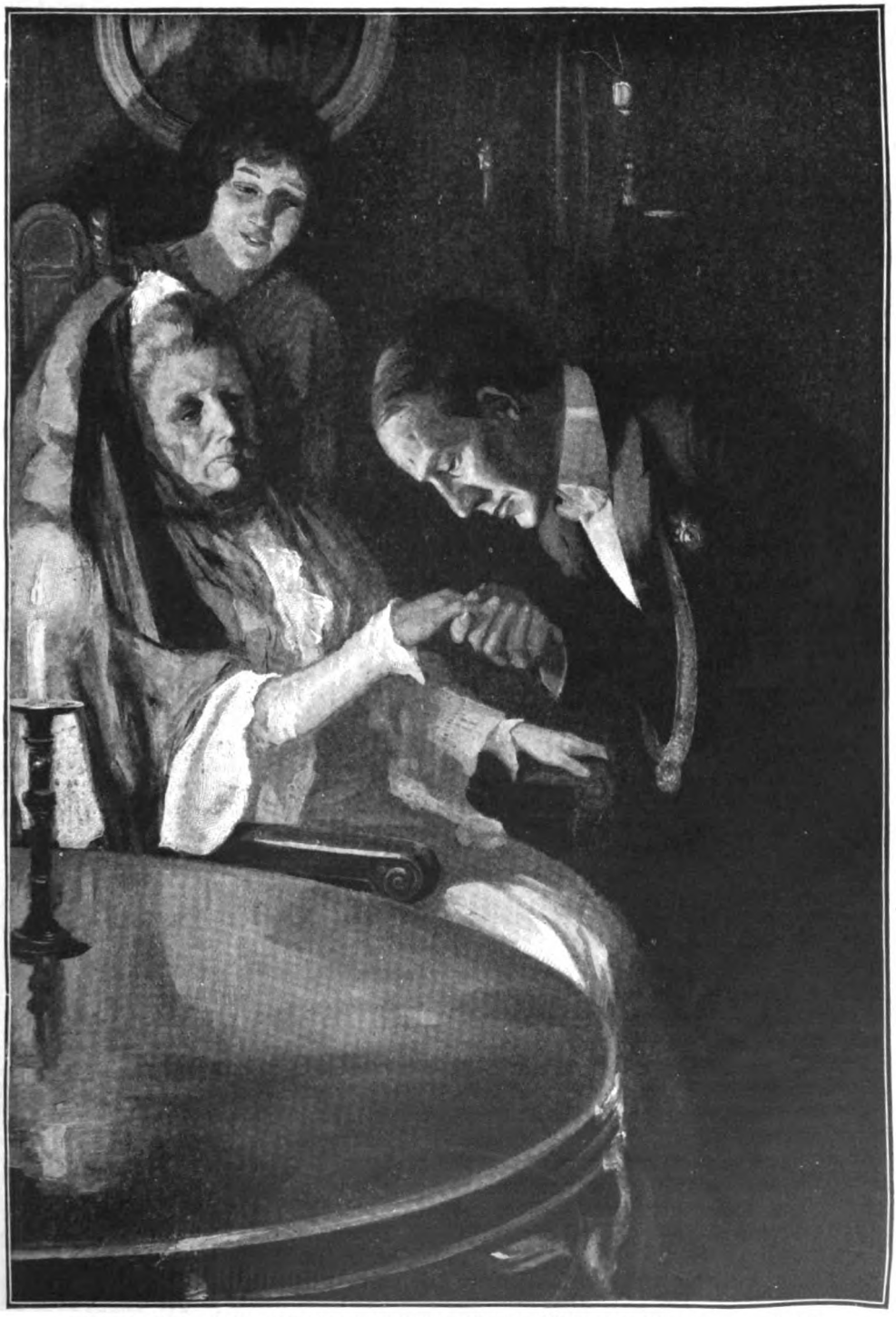
"Do you?" The Count smiled and rose. "Well, perhaps you're right," he said. "I must go and dress now."

In his own room, while he changed for the evening, his face relaxed a little; it always stimulated him to see the cool, unwavering courage of Colonel Sarasin. The old soldier, working for a wage as teacher of drill and gymnastics in suburban high schools, and answering to the title of sergeant, faced the problems and complexities of life with a matter-of-fact address that went far towards unravelling them. "There is a week yet," he had said, and in his mouth the words carried a suggestion of scope for effort, of resources yet to be tried, of hope in the ultimate decency of the world's arrangements. In the old days, when his favour had been high and his name potent, no one had thought of describing him as an optimist; but he had carried with him into the exile whither he followed his Princess a cheerful courage that nothing could impair. Besides the Colonel and the Count, there were three men and two ladies who shared that house with the old forgotten Princess—all that were left faithful in that day when an empire overflowed its banks in South-Eastern Europe and sucked down a little thriving monarchy.

The Count changed quickly, hurrying into evening dress before his narrow mirror. He hung an Order at his collar and pinned another to his breast; then, with a last glance to see that all was right, he went to pay his formal visit to the Princess. He knocked cautiously at a wide door, and a smiling lady peeped out at him. A moment later it was opened wide and he was bidden to enter.

"His Excellency the Count Palmaria," announced the lady.

It was a large room, less bare than any of the others, for crimson curtains screened its broad windows and a red carpet covered the floor. The lamps had not yet been lit, so that the old woman who lay back in her armchair in a far corner was only visible as a pale bundle against the dark paper on the walls.



"'I AM YOUR HIGHNESS'S MOST GRATEFUL SERVANT,' HE SAID, IN HIS STILL VOICE OF CEREMONY."

The Count walked across and bowed before her. She stirred in her chair and sighed.

"Be seated, Count," she said, in a voice that was little more than a whisper.

The Count brought forward a chair and placed himself before her. The lady who had admitted him lit a candle and placed it on a table at the Princess's elbow, and then took up her station behind the Princess's chair. She was tall, with a face that fell naturally to the shape of a smile; she seemed to preserve without effort the grace and fragrance of a late youth. It was not hard to trace in her features her pleasant likeness to her brother the Count.

The old Princess sighed and blinked at the sudden light of the candle.

"You—you have no news for me?" she asked, absently, still in that failing voice that rustled uncertainly from her lips.

"There is no news, madam," the Count answered, formally. It was a daily ritual. The news for which she asked was tidings of a Court and a people which had ceased to be, of a world from which she was sedulously held immune. That same stress which had bereaved her of her husband and her country had eased her of her sorrows; for the Princess time had stood still.

She acknowledged the Count's answer with a trembling motion of the head, and put out an uncertain hand over the arm of her chair. The Countess Leda took it in both of hers and held it. She was very old and infirm, a mere packet of ailments and defects—that, and a Princess. By virtue of the loyalty of seven of her people, she was still a Princess. The Count, decorously silent till she should speak, saw her now in the light of the candle with eyes that were true to his memories; for him the drooping, pitiful, witless old face still carried traces of the grave lady, serene and Royal, who had commanded his early allegiance. In her presence he never remembered that he was foreign correspondent to the firm of Messrs. Philister Brothers, turning his familiarity with languages to money, to help, as the others helped, to keep his Princess safe and untroubled.

"It has been very interesting to hear you, Count," she said, wearily, as though he had been speaking for a long time. "Very interesting, Count. But—but I will not keep you longer."

She put forward her right hand. Rising, he took it on his and bent to kiss it.

"I am your Highness's most grateful servant," he said, in his still voice of ceremony. For the Count was one of tho e men who express themselves most sincerely in ceremonial.

It suited the arrangements of that household that its meals should be taken in the kitchen. It was a big room on the ground floor; its windows looked out on the slow river and its slopes of mud. Only the Countess Leda was absent; it was her part to keep the old Princess company in the room upstairs till it was time to put her to bed. The others were already assembled when the Count entered, and the table was spread. He bowed from the threshold to little Mme. Rieu, and the others he acknowledged collectively. They returned his bow with the due form.

"Come, then," said Mme. Rieu, when this was done. "Who will give me his arm all the way across the room?"

"It is my turn," said Colonel Sarasin. He squired her to the table. She was a little, lively person, with the face of a clever child set in a halo of white hair—once the Princess's secretary; now a most efficient stenographer to a novelist at Richmond. The Colonel took his place at her right hand; the chair on her other side was occupied by Baron Casimir, another foreign correspondent. Baron Saronoff was at his side, and opposite him sat Gaspar Rodolfe, with his bald head and keen, wise, humorous face. He was an artist, a man of an unguessed and unrevealed talent, who worked steadily, and sometimes at very remunerative prices, designing wall-papers and linoleums. Count Palmaria made up the list of them, with the Countess Leda's empty chair at his elbow. Mme. Rieu chatted vivaciously with Gaspar Rodolfe, while the others listened, and in due time, her duty for the day finished, they were joined by the Countess Leda.

She looked round at them with a pleasant eagerness as she took her seat.

"Has anything been decided?" she asked.

"We have not talked of anything," Rodolfe answered her. "We waited for you."

She nodded to him, smiling. "That was kind," she said. Everything was conceded to Leda, because she never asserted a claim.

"There wasn't anything to decide," put in Colonel Sarasin, in a bass rumble. "We've still got no money, and we've still to get it. That's all there is to say."

"How much do we owe?" asked Mme. Rieu.

Gaspar Rodolfe pushed his cup away.

"The total is eighty-six pounds," he answered. "But seventy pounds is the amount which troubles us now. That is our debt to our landlord, and we must pay it within a week from now."

"Must?" Mme. Rieu put the word with delicate emphasis.

"Must," replied Rodolfe, seriously. "Or he—his men, that is—will come in and force us out. That seems to be certain."

His sharp, clever face thrust the fact home to them. He turned to the Countess Leda.

"Each of us has made trial of his—or her—employers," he explained. "But our efforts have resulted in a total of seven pounds—leaving sixty-three pounds still to be obtained. Now"—he frowned thoughtfully—"it is inconceivable that the six of us, each braced to the purpose, should find such a sum utterly out of reach. There must be a market somewhere where we should be quoted at a higher value than that. As for me, I confess, my brains are stale of late; there is a film over my intelligence; and I cannot guess where that market is. But I feel it is somewhere; my vanity will not let me doubt it. So it is well we should consider the thing together, in the hope that our joint intelligence may discover it."

A silence followed his words; six thoughtful faces were turned towards him. Count Palmaria nervously fingered the star on his coat, Mme. Rieu's fingers were making a cigarette without the help of her eyes. Rodolfe looked round at them all, and smiled.

"No suggestions?" he asked.

The Countess Leda leaned forward nervously.

"Our landlord," she suggested. "Could you not talk to him? Could I not talk to him?" She flushed, but held on courageously. "I would not mind pleading with him," she added.

Rodolfe bowed to her. "It is a gracious and a kindly thought," he said. "A thought that does you honour, Countess. But our landlord is abroad; his agent acts for him, and he is not the person to do you the favour you would ask. No; there is nothing for it but the money or the end of the world."

Again there was a pause. Presently the Baron Saronoff, mild and spectacled, spoke.

"I can make no suggestion," he said, gently. "But if we fail to obtain the money, what is the alternative? I mean—what will happen to—to Her Highness? Can you not take her elsewhere?"

"No." It was the Countess Leda who replied. She spoke with a manner of authority. "We cannot move the Princess. The doctor told me so to-day."

"I see," said the Baron. "I see now. Then we must get the money. We shall not get it by sitting here."

He was a very benevolent-looking little gentleman, with his round spectacles and his gentleness; but he spoke in a tone of conviction.

"I doubt whether that market exists in which we are to be bought at our own price," he explained. "But if it does, talking together will not find it. For my part, I shall make inquiries in the City. There is a youth in the office in which I am employed who knows how to obtain money. His stipend is eighteen shillings a week; but that does not deter him from going into the world. He visits the theatre; he discriminates among vintages; in short, he is expensive and ornamental. I shall consult him."

He looked about him with an air of innocent determination, like a resolute lamb, and took their smiles for a tribute. Colonel Sarasin laughed loud and deep.

"All the same, it is the only thing that has been suggested," cried the Colonel. "It is an idea, at any rate. Suppose, now, this were my own case, a personal matter of my own. What should I do? Here are seven pounds; I need seventy, and I go into the world, late in the evening. I seek with care a suitable place, a discreet house where such things are in order, and I put my fate and my money upon the card which takes my fancy. And either I have my seventy or I am not much farther from it. That is what I should do—Lord! it is what I have done, again and again, in the old days when the case was mine."

Baron Casimir shook his head soberly. "But this is not such a case," he demurred.

"No," said Rodolfe, thoughtfully, while little Saronoff looked from one to the other in the bewilderment of sudden revelation. "No," he repeated, pondering. "Still——"

They waited anxiously for him to conclude. Only the Countess Leda looked a little distressed. Mme. Rieu, at the other end of the table, smoked imperturbably.

"Still," said Rodolfe, suddenly, "it *is* an idea, for which we must thank the Baron Saronoff. And it is to be considered. Yes, it is to be——" He broke off, with a quick flash of excitement in his vivid face. "Why," he cried, "it is what we must do, if no money is obtained otherwise. Seven pounds is neither here nor there, since it will not save the Princess. How can we neglect to take any *chance*?"

He looked round at them with a swift vivacity that challenged their minds. On each of them the idea was dawning as a hope.

"Do you see?" he cried. "Let us continue to try to get money, by all means. We

have a week—six days without the Sunday. For four of them let us go on, seriously and persistently, to exhaust all possible sources. *Then*, if we have failed, let us choose one of our number—or two, perhaps—to try this other expedient. For I, for one, shall not dare to leave anything untried."

He turned to the Countess Leda. "Madam," he said, "will you approve of this plan?"

She hesitated. "I will not ask you to leave anything untried," she said, slowly.

He turned to Mme. Rieu.

"It has my best wishes," she said.

"Then are we to regard it as arranged?" asked Rodolfe, putting the question to the men. There was no answer for a space of seconds.

"I think it is agreed," said Count Palmaria.

Gaspar Rodolfe bowed.

It is an instinct of man to trust the final expedient. Perhaps for the inhabitants of that old, cheap house there was no market; but that they could never know. To each of them, as the four days slipped by, came a sense that, after all, they had not expended their utmost endeavours to raise the needful money. Little Baron Saronoff felt this acutely; he had yet an idea that a man of adroitness and observation, though bare of capital and empty of business training, could squeeze the City between his hands and see it drip profit as one wrings water from a sponge. He made confession of the matter to the Countess Leda Palmaria.

"One sees men rushing about," he told her, "hatless, intent, feverish. They create an atmosphere; they are straining themselves like athletes. That, I think, is the key to modern business; one must be tense, galvanic, swamped in affairs; one must rush about. Now I, Countess—I have not been rushing about!"

The Countess Leda smiled. "Nor I," she answered.

The fourth day was upon the household before its members knew it; it came with the fateful quickness of a great occasion. The Count Palmaria, as he dressed that evening for his audience with the old Princess, was smitten with astonishment at a review of the things he might have done. A vague indignation possessed him at the thought, but this soon passed when he was in the presence of the Princess again. Her infirmity was heavy on her that evening; she lay more loosely in her chair than usual; a barren vacancy ruled her face; her hands trembled and flopped past her guidance. It helped to nerve him, the sight of her witless weakness; all in him that was leal and gallant responded to the summons of her need and her helplessness; and he went from her to join the others with something less than his usual discreet and deliberate gravity.

In obedience to the courteous convention that governed them, none spoke of the matter of the money till the Countess Leda arrived and took her place and was served with tea and bread and butter. Her coming was the signal for the casual talk to cease.

The Countess Leda looked up. "Does the arrangement still hold?" she asked.

"Yes," answered Gaspar Rodolfe. "We are reduced to the arrangement you mean. We have not got the money."

"When?" asked the Countess. She was serious and quiet, and spoke with a touch of reserve.

"It *should be* to-morrow night," he replied. "We have no time to waste, Countess. The thing to settle now is which of us shall be deputed to—er—to manage the transaction."

He looked at the Count Palmaria as he spoke, and, as other eyes foliowed his, the Count reddened faintly. Among the things he had left behind him when his country ceased to be was the reputation of a skilled and indomitable gambler. He coughed and spoke hesitatingly.

"There should, I think, be two," he said. "We must not forget we are in a strange country; two of us are less likely to be at a loss than one."

Colonel Sarasin nodded his agreement. "That's right," he said. "*He* knows."

Rodolfe was playing with his teaspoon like a man who is embarrassed.

"It is obvious," he said, "that the Count Palmaria should be one of these two."

He looked up at the Countess Leda almost appealingly. She nodded gravely.

"Yes," she said, with half a sigh; "that is obvious. If it is to be done, it should be done by Max." Her left hand found the Count's right and she pressed it.

Those who were watching the Count saw him frown for an instant. Then his face cleared, and he threw back his shoulders with a short laugh.

"I shall be like a ghost revisiting the glimpses of the moon," he said. "And now for my companion. I nominate my friend, Gaspar Rodolfe."

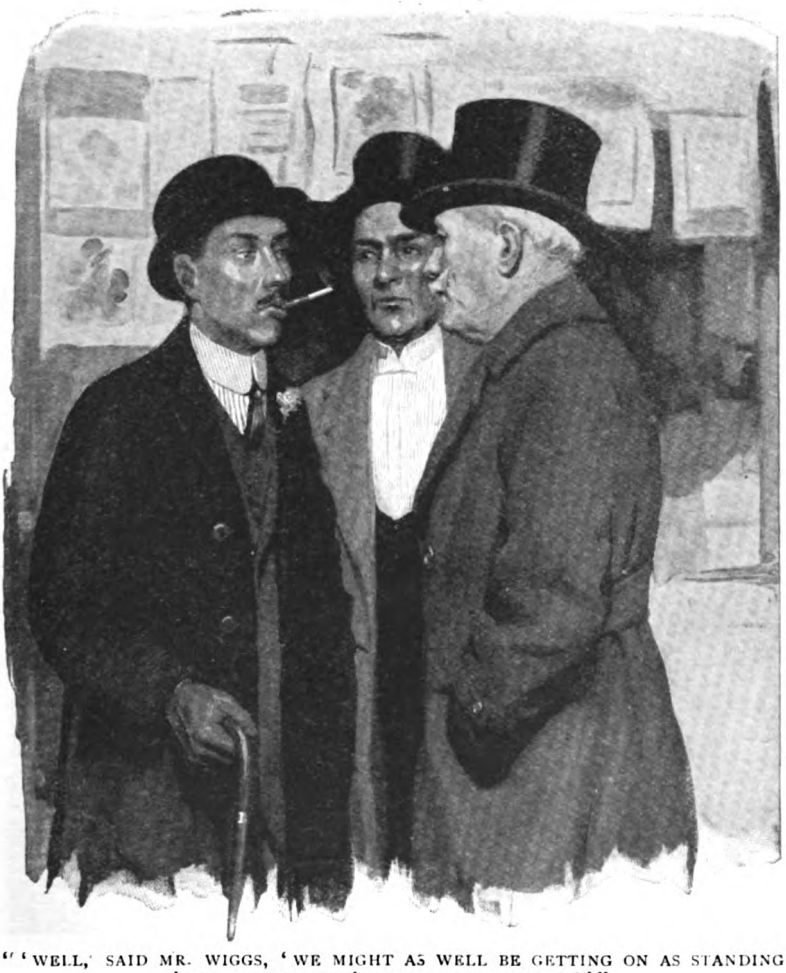
"Capital!" cried Mme. Rieu. "Capital!"

"But where will you play?" demanded Colonel Sarasin. "You won't find a sign on a house with 'Dice' or 'Cards' written on it."

Little Baron Saronoff beamed on them like a grey-haired baby.

"I will provide for that," he said, importantly. "I inquired of my young friend, and he will meet you at the bookstall in Waterloo Station and be your guide. He they accosted him. He was a flabby youth, loose in the mouth and puffy under the eyes; and he was much too obviously impressed by the bearing of the pair he had undertaken to chaperon.

"Who'd ha' thought it?" he demanded.



"'WELL,' SAID MR. WIGGS, 'WE MIGHT AS WELL BE GETTING ON AS STANDING 'ERE—UNLESS YOU'D CARE FOR A DRINK?'"

will wear an orchid in his coat to be recognizable; he follows a fashion set by the Lord Chamberlain. His name is Wiggs."

"We shall be very grateful to Mr. Wiggs," said the Count.

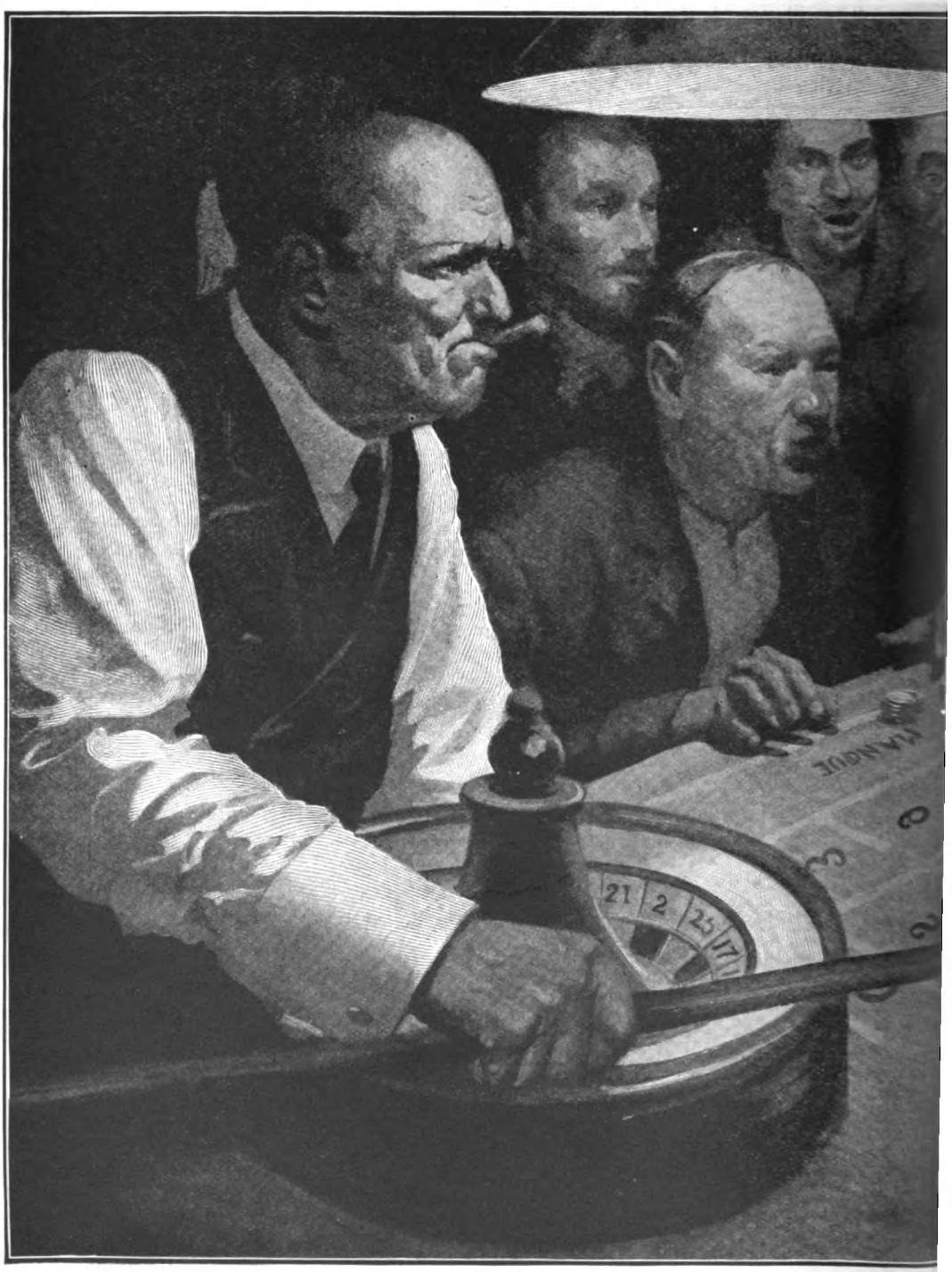
The Countess Leda was smiling at Rodolfe. He seemed uneasy under it.

No sense of the importance of their mission was lacking in the Count and his companion when they set forth on the following evening. Mr. Wiggs, lingering, his cigarette out, near the bookstall, received a sensible shock when

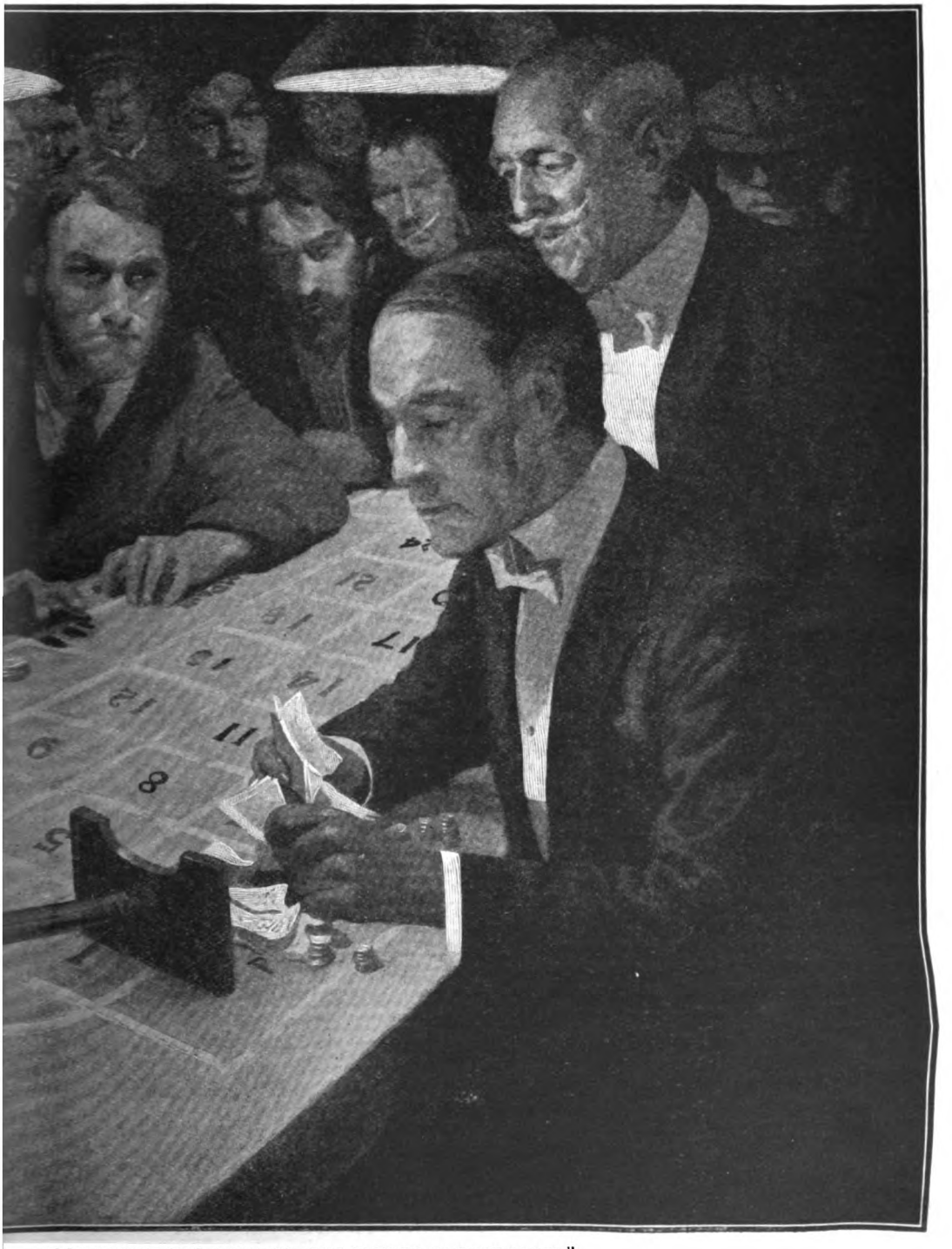
"From what I heard, I was expecting a couple of young chaps—from the country, you know; not a couple of gents like you. Still, sport's sport, isn't it?"

"I agree with you," replied the Count, while Rodolfe made an inspection of Mr. Wiggs which was not altogether satisfactory. The young gentleman had too much the appearance of a callow pigeon.

"Well," said Mr. Wiggs, "we might as well be getting on as standing 'ere—unless you'd care for a drink? No? Well, I won't press you. Shall we 'ave a cab?"



"THERE WAS LIVELY INTEREST IN THE COUNT NOW, FOR



FIVE POUNDS WAS A SUM OF SOME DIGNITY IN THAT PLACE."

They had a cab, and Mr. Wiggs directed the driver to set them down in Leicester Square. "It's not a minute from there," he explained to his companions. It appeared that he could give them no choice of places to go to; he knew only one gambling-hell, or roulette shop, on the fringe of Soho, a concern perched precariously in an upper floor where the police had not yet penetrated. "But," explained Mr. Wiggs, "it's on the square. I will say that for it. If it wasn't there'd soon be rows, an' that's just what a sporting house can't afford in London."

"I should have preferred cards," said the Count, thoughtfully. "But since there is no choice, roulette will suffice. It does not entirely do away with the superiority of the wise man over the foolish one."

"Ah, you've been at this game before," hazarded Mr. Wiggs, acutely.

They found their destination at last, in a forlorn street of obscure shops. There were formalities to be gone through at several doors before they emerged at last into a large room where some half-hundred people were sitting and standing about the figured table and the numbered wheel. Shaded lamps over the table, casting all their light downwards; outside the scope of their rays, the place was in shadow. Play was in full swing when they arrived; a hard-faced croupier with a broken nose presided in his shirt-sleeves, his teeth clenched on the butt of a cigar; and all was governed by a furtive and tip-toe quality, a cautious hush.

The Count received change from a fat woman in tight evening dress—ten half-sovereigns and two pounds' worth of silver—and, with Rodolfe at his elbow, went over to look at the play across the heads of the seated gamblers. Both had left their overcoats at the *garde-robe*, and found themselves conspicuous by reason of their evening dress. Most of those about them seemed to be representatives of the various foreign colonies in Soho, with a sprinkling of clerks and shop-keepers, a heterogeneous and dangerous crowd. Mr. Wiggs merged himself into it and was lost like a glass bead in water; it was his own element.

"Is this a place to win seventy pounds?" whispered Rodolfe.

"Perhaps," said the Count, shortly.

Red had won several times running, and was being backed by a large number of players. Suddenly the Count drew a half-sovereign from his pocket and placed it on black, where it lay solitary. The croupier shot a swift glance at him as he placed his stake.

"Game's made," he cried, and started the wheel.

"Now we shall see," said the Count to Rodolfe. "If red wins again, he will pay nearly a hundred pounds. If black wins, he has only to pay me."

"Black and odd wins," announced the croupier; and the Count picked up his money.

A few minutes later a chair fell vacant, and the Count took it. Rodolfe stationed himself at his back, and the Count began to play. Many looked at him, at his demeanour of quiet and repose, at the precise mask of his face and the calculated assurance of his play. He was careful and moderate; from backing one of the colours, always in favour of the bank, he advanced to staking on squares of twelve numbers, and for a while did not push his game farther. Little by little he collected in front of him a small heap of coins—half-sovereigns and silver. Rodolfe, who knew little of the game, watched him in fascination; it was so dainty, so wonderful an art to see in exercise, the out-manœuvring of blind chance and cheatery in alliance. The formal, silent man seated at the table was not the Count Palmaria he had known through lean years of clipped and starved life, an old-maidish man who had outlived his purpose. This was another, an altogether more formidable person, serene and calm where all others were fevered and tense, a gambler of the grand school, one of those who fortify the vice with their own stubborn virtues. He noted it all with a keen palate for its dramatic flavour, for Gaspar Rodolfe was always an artist.

A couple of hours slipped by, and at last the Count leaned back. "We have half," he whispered. "Thirty-five pounds. The table cheats like a Chinaman."

Rodolfe shrugged. "It is all in your hands, Count," he said. "You are master here."

The Count nodded. "I am going to play in earnest now," he said. "You must remember it is a game of chance. Or it should be."

He leaned forward and spoke to the croupier.

"What is the maximum?" he inquired.

The croupier turned and looked at him and at the money before him.

"Call it five pounds," he replied. He seemed a little puzzled, for some reason; Rodolfe, looking at his hard fighter's face, thought he detected signs of ill-ease.

The Count only nodded. He scanned the table before him and pushed five pounds forward. Everybody looked up with quick interest, and from the farther end of the table there was a craning of necks. The Count slid the money on to a single number.

"That is number twenty-four," he said, aloud. The croupier scowled. A minute later he raked in the money. Mr. Wiggs, peering over the heads of the sitters, vented a cackle of laughter. The Count smiled, and thrust forward another five pounds.

"Twenty-four again," he remarked, pleasantly. He looked at the croupier as he spoke, and once more that functionary scowled. The Count's stake was raked in as before.

There was lively interest in the Count now, for five pounds was a sum of some dignity in that place. Rodolfe, the practised observer, was able to deduce that from the faces, as a third and a fourth stake of five pounds went the way of the first and second. At the fifth, the fat lady who acted as money-changer came over to look on, and the croupier suddenly spat his cigar out and began to fidget and look at the clock. He glanced again and again at the Count, sharp, speculative glances shot from under narrow brows.

"Twenty-four again," said the Count, placidly.

A Greek opposite him shut his mouth with a snap, and, with the air of a man who has reached a determination, threw a half-crown on the same number. The Count shook his head slightly, and the Greek darted forth a hand and picked his coin up again.

"Thirteen, red and odd," announced the croupier, and swept in the Count's five pounds.

Scarcely had his rake passed over the table when the Count thrust forward the last five pounds. He leaned both elbows on the board and looked down to the croupier. His pale, clean-cut face was impassive save for a little smile; he stood out, in that crowd of hucksters, like a jewel in the mud. The croupier evaded his eye and its quiet significance. Rodolfe saw that the man's face was suddenly shiny with sweat.

"Twenty-four again," the Count said, in his pleasant, rather high voice. "And this wins," he added, distinctly.

"Oh, does it?" said the croupier.

"Yes," replied the Count.

There rose to Rodolfe's mind at that moment a quick remembrance of what it all meant, a flash-light picture of the household at Mortlake, its welfare balanced in the coming turn of the wheel. The interest and novelty of watching the play had banished it till then. He felt a gush of excitement rise in him, and laid a hand on the Count's shoulder.

"For God's sake!" he breathed.

The Count shrugged him off.

"Yes, this wins," he repeated.

Rodolfe saw the croupier bite his lower lip and nod his head like a man who resigns himself. He eyed the Count no more, but started the wheel with a jerk of impatience, and sat looking at it. It slowed, and the ball fell into the basin and buzzed there uneasily; Rodolfe cleared his eyes with his hand. He couldn't see the number as the wheel stopped, and blanched as a cry arose from those who leaned over it. The Count was sitting back in his chair, unmoved, his tranquillity intact, like an eggshell that has come unbroken through an earthquake. There was a surge of people, a babble of various tongues, incomprehensible and bewildering. Then the croupier rose; his rake thrust something down the table. Rodolfe saw the Count's hands fingering through a heap of money.

"Game's off!" cried the croupier, unsteadily. "Bank's broke," he explained.

Rodolfe went down the stairs and into the street with the Count's arm in his and wonder surging in his mind like a tide.

"How much have you won?" he asked, breathlessly.

"It should be a hundred and sixty pounds," replied the Count, tranquilly. "But it was three pounds short."

Rodolfe took the fact in slowly and flavoured the relief and succour of it at length. But when they were ensconced in the train he burst out.

"But what was the meaning of it?" he cried. "You played like a madman, and the table was unfair. Why did he let you win?"

The Count Palmaria leaned back in his corner and crossed his legs.

"My dear Gaspar," he said, "to be a gambler one must be a man of personality. But to be a cheat one must be a man of much greater personality. Consider, now; the croupier was braking the wheel so that I should lose. Anyone could do it once or twice. But to do it thrice running calls for some courage; to do it four times demanded hardihood as well. The fifth time is the real test; did you notice how he relieved himself of his cigar and braced himself? The sixth time shook him badly; his nerve did not last it out, so that at the seventh he did as I counted on him to do—he gave me the game. It was merely a contest of individuality, or personalities—myself against a type which I understand very completely."

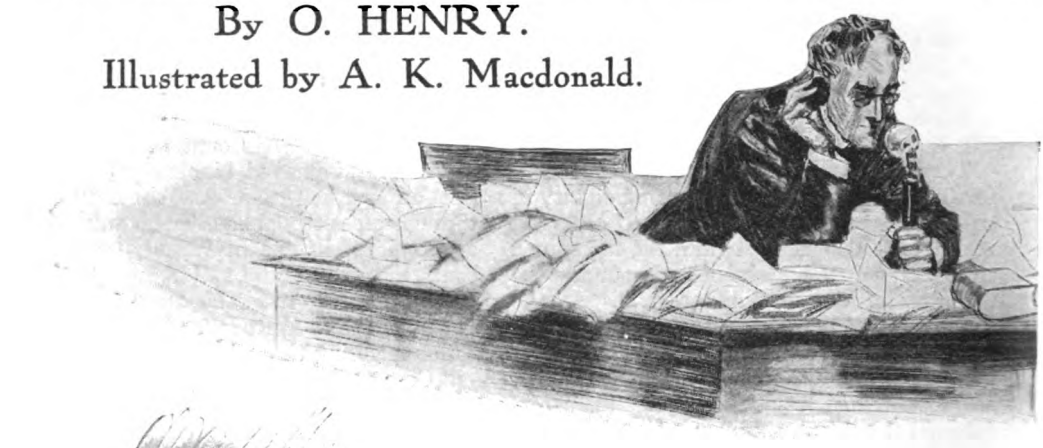
There was a pause as he concluded. Gaspar Rodolfe broke it. "They will be sitting up for us to-night," he said, inconsequently.

"God bless them!" answered the Count Palmaria.

THE ROMANCE OF A

By O. HENRY.

Illustrated by A. K. Macdonald.



"ON THIS MORNING SHE WAS SOFTLY AND SHYLY RADIANT."

PITCHER, confidential clerk in the office of Harvey Maxwell, broker, allowed a look of mild interest and surprise to visit his usually expressionless countenance when his employer briskly entered at half-past nine in company with his young lady typist. With a snappy "Good morning, Pitcher," Maxwell dashed at his desk as though he were intending to leap over it, and then plunged into the great heap of letters and telegrams waiting there for him.

The young lady had been Maxwell's typist for a year. She was beautiful in a way that was decidedly untypographic. She forewent the pomp of the alluring pompadour. She wore no chains, bracelets, or lockets. She had not the air of being about to accept an invitation to luncheon. Her dress was grey and plain, but it fitted her figure with fidelity and discretion. In her neat black turban hat was the gold-green wing of a macaw. On this morning she was softly and shyly radiant. Her eyes were dreamily bright, her expression a happy one, tinged with reminiscence.

Pitcher, still mildly curious, noticed a difference in her ways this morning. Instead of going straight into the adjoining room, where her desk was, she lingered, slightly irresolute, in the outer office. Once she moved over by Maxwell's desk, near enough for him to be aware of her presence.

The machine sitting at that desk was no longer a man; it was a busy New York

BUSY BROKER.

broker, moved by buzzing wheels and uncoiling springs.

"Well—what is it? Anything?" asked Maxwell, sharply. His opened letters lay like a bank of stage snow on his crowded desk. His keen grey eye, impersonal and brusque, flashed upon her half-impatiently.

"Nothing," answered the typist, moving away with a little smile.

"Mr. Pitcher," she said to the confidential clerk, "did Mr. Maxwell say anything yesterday about engaging another typist?"

"He did," answered Pitcher. "He told me to get another one. I notified the agency yesterday afternoon to send over a few samples this morning. It's nine forty-five o'clock, and not a single picture-hat or piece of pineapple chewing-gum has showed up yet."

"I will do the work as usual, then," said the young lady, "until someone comes to fill the place." And she went to her desk at once and hung the black turban

"'WELL—WHAT IS IT? ANYTHING?' ASKED MAXWELL, SHARPLY."

hat with the gold-green macaw wing in its accustomed place.

He who has been denied the spectacle of a busy broker during a rush of business is handicapped for the profession of anthropology. The poet sings of the "crowded hour of glorious life." The broker's hour is not only crowded, but the minutes and seconds are hanging to all the straps and packing both front and rear platforms.

And this day was Harvey Maxwell's busy day. The ticker began to reel out jerkily its fitful coils of tape, the desk telephone had a chronic attack of buzzing. Men began to throng into the office and call at him over the railing, jovially, sharply, viciously, excitedly. Messenger boys ran in and out with messages and telegrams. The clerks in the office jumped about like sailors during a storm. Even Pitcher's face relaxed into something resembling animation.

"'OH, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?' EXCLAIMED THE YOUNG LADY."

On the Exchange there were hurricanes and landslides and snowstorms and glaciers and volcanoes, and those elemental disturbances were reproduced in miniature in the broker's offices. Maxwell shoved his chair against the wall and transacted business after the manner of a toe-dancer. He jumped from ticker to phone, from desk to door, with the trained agility of a harlequin.

In the midst of this growing and important stress the broker became suddenly aware of a high-rolled fringe of golden hair under a nodding canopy of velvet and ostrich tips, an imitation sealskin sacque, and a string of beads as large as hickory nuts, ending near the floor with a silver heart. There was a self-possessed young lady connected with these accessories; and Pitcher was there to construe her.

"Lady from the Typewriting Agency to see about the position," said Pitcher.

Maxwell turned half-around, with his hands full of papers and ticker tape.

"What position?" he asked, with a frown.

"Position of typist," said Pitcher. "You told me yesterday to call them up and have one sent over this morning."

"You are losing your mind, Pitcher," said Maxwell. "Why should I have given you any such instructions? Miss Leslie has

given perfect satisfaction during the year she has been here. The place is hers as long as she chooses to retain it. There's no place open here, madam. Countermand that order with the agency, Pitcher, and don't bring any more of 'em in here."

The silver heart left the office, swinging and banging itself independently against the office furniture as it indignantly departed. Pitcher seized a moment to remark to the bookkeeper that the "old man" seemed to get more absent-minded and forgetful every day of the world.

The rush and pace of business grew fiercer and faster. On the floor of the Exchange they were pounding half-a-dozen stocks in which Maxwell's customers were heavy investors. Orders to buy and sell were coming and going as swift as the flight of swallows. Some of his own holdings were imperilled, and the man was working like some high-geared, delicate, strong machine —strung to full tension, going at full speed, accurate, never hesitating, with the proper word and decision and act ready and prompt as clockwork. Stocks and bonds, loans and mortgages, margins and securities—here was a world of finance, and there was no room in it for the human world or the world of Nature.

When the luncheon hour drew near there came a slight lull in the uproar.

Maxwell stood by his desk with his hands full of telegrams and memoranda, with a fountain pen over his right ear and his hair hanging in disorderly strings over his forehead. His window was open, for Spring had turned on a little warmth through the waking registers of the earth.

And through the window came a wandering—perhaps a lost—odour—a delicate, sweet odour of lilac that fixed the broker for a moment immovable. For this odour belonged to Miss Leslie; it was her own, and hers only.

The odour brought her vividly, almost tangibly before him. The world of finance dwindled suddenly to a speck. And she was in the next room—twenty steps away.

"By George, I'll do it now," said Maxwell, half-aloud. "I'll ask her now. I wonder I didn't do it long ago."

He dashed into the inner office with the haste of an excited speculator. He charged upon the desk of the typist.

She looked up at him with a smile. A soft pink crept over her cheek, and her eyes were kind and frank. Maxwell leaned one elbow on her desk. He still clutched fluttering papers with both hands and the pen was above his ear.

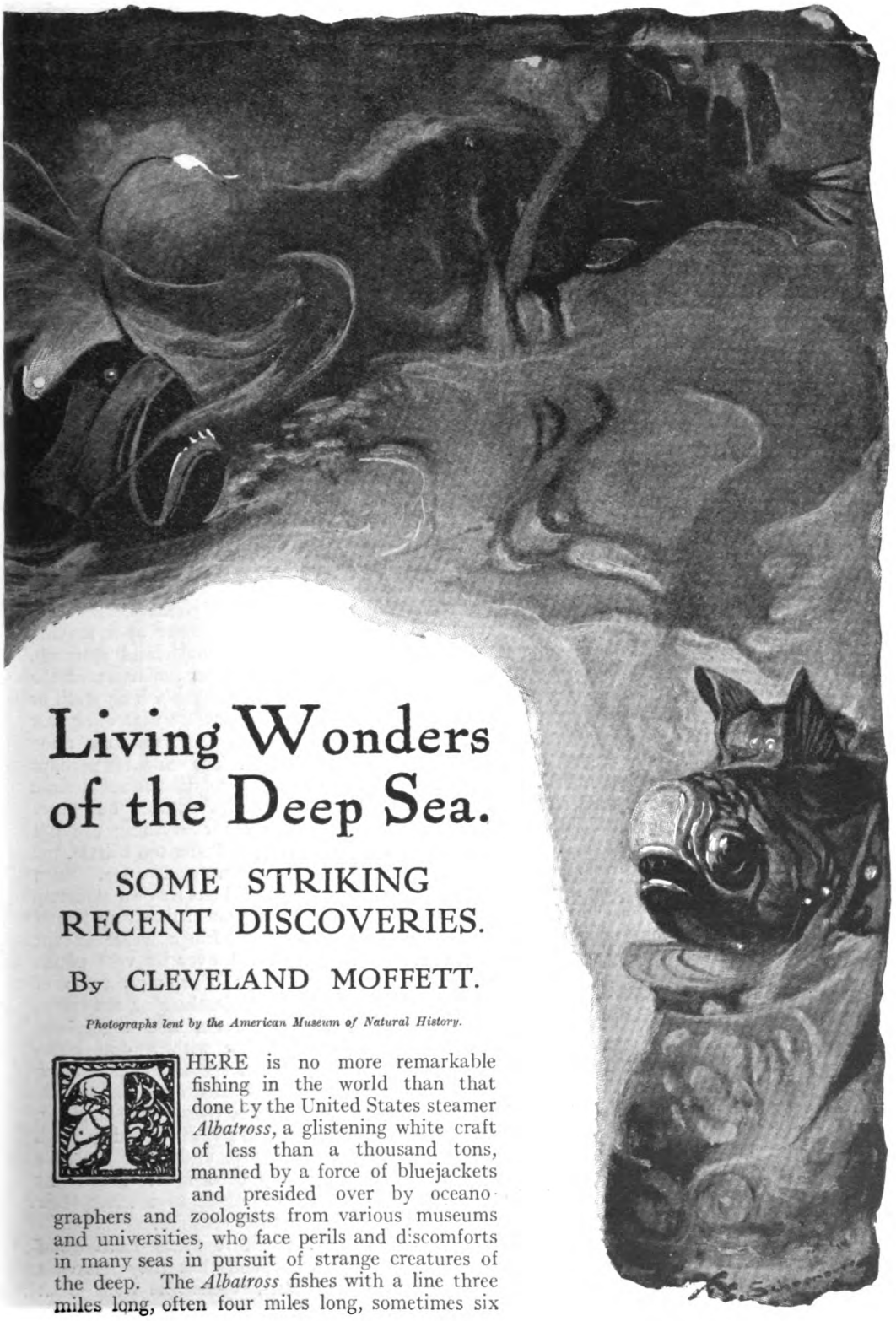
"Miss Leslie," he began, hurriedly, "I have but a moment to spare. I want to say something in that moment. Will you be my wife? I haven't had time to make love to you in the ordinary way, but I really do love you. Talk quick, please—those fellows are clubbing the stuffing out of Union Pacific."

"Oh, what are you talking about?" exclaimed the young lady. She rose to her feet and gazed upon him, round-eyed.

"Don't you understand?" said Maxwell, restively. "I want you to marry me. I love you, Miss Leslie. I wanted to tell you, and I snatched a minute when things had slackened up a bit. They're calling me for the phone now. Tell 'em to wait a minute, Pitcher. Won't you, Miss Leslie?"

The typist acted very queerly. At first she seemed overcome with amazement; then tears flowed from her wondering eyes; and then she smiled sunnily through them, and her two arms slid tenderly about the broker's neck.

"I know now," she said, softly. "It's this old business that has driven everything else out of your head for the time. I was frightened at first. Don't you remember, Harvey? We were married yesterday in the Little Church Round the Corner!"



Living Wonders of the Deep Sea.

SOME STRIKING RECENT DISCOVERIES.

By CLEVELAND MOFFETT.

Photographs lent by the American Museum of Natural History.

THERE is no more remarkable fishing in the world than that done by the United States steamer *Albatross*, a glistening white craft of less than a thousand tons, manned by a force of bluejackets and presided over by oceanographers and zoologists from various museums and universities, who face perils and discomforts in many seas in pursuit of strange creatures of the deep. The *Albatross* fishes with a line three miles long, often four miles long, sometimes six

miles long or over, a line of slender cable, but wonderfully strong, rolled off a deck winch by a sputtering steam engine, that will bring up from the ocean floor a three or four ton haul of sponges, crinoids, jelly fish, sea-urchins, giant crabs, long white worms that break in two if you touch them, phosphorescent trees — really animals — sea-cucumbers with hideous heads, starfish, devil-fish, pelican-fish, lantern-fish, sharks' teeth, whales' ear-bones, sea-cows' ribs, and scores of other extraordinary things.

The *Albatross* follows no beaten paths of commerce. She goes where other vessels rarely go. She explores forgotten corners of the seven seas, drops her great nets by day and by night, takes hundreds of soundings in uncharted waters, and, after a cruise of months, brings home her trophies for final safe keeping in jars filled with alcohol and labelled with Greek and Latin names. This sort of work she has been doing for over thirty years.

For details of work done aboard the *Albatross*, and of strange creatures brought up by her from the depths of the ocean, I am indebted to Dr. Austin H. Clark, of the Washington National Museum, who was the scientist in charge of this interesting vessel during one of her recent cruises in the Pacific. From the Bering Sea to the waters east of Korea they zigzagged backwards and forwards during many months, making hundreds of hauls and soundings, and bringing up deep-sea specimens that will keep men busy for months sorting them and classifying them.

It appears that various kinds of nets are used in oceanographic work, some so arranged that they can be sent down closed, and then opened, at any desired depth, by an iron messenger sent sliding down the wire; then, having been left open long enough to catch specimens at that depth, they may be closed again by another messenger.

The trawl-net used by the *Albatross* in deep-sea fishing—it weighs about two hundred and fifty pounds—is a huge bag twenty-three feet long and twelve feet wide. Its mouth is held open by a twelve-foot iron crossbar, and among the weights that take it to the bottom is a five-hundred-pound iron ball that hangs from the reeled-out steel cable, miles of it, and hauls the net behind; that is, the steamer drags the iron ball and the ball drags the net, this arrangement being necessary to keep the net under even horizontal pull.

Every day, when the *Albatross* is working in favourable waters, the trawl-net is lowered and dragged along for hours at a depth of one mile or two miles or three miles or four miles; then it is lifted to the deck and its contents are dumped into receiving sieves, where the mud is washed out and the treasures of the sea are separated.

Among the strangest creatures brought up from great depths, sometimes as great as three miles, are the "lilies that eat meat," hungry-mouthed animals that have the form of beautiful plants with gracefully branching arms and brilliant colours. These crinoids, as they are scientifically known, spread miles over the floor of the ocean in vast swaying gardens, all red or all yellow at great depths, but in the higher levels abounding in many gorgeous pinks and purples, blues and crimsons.

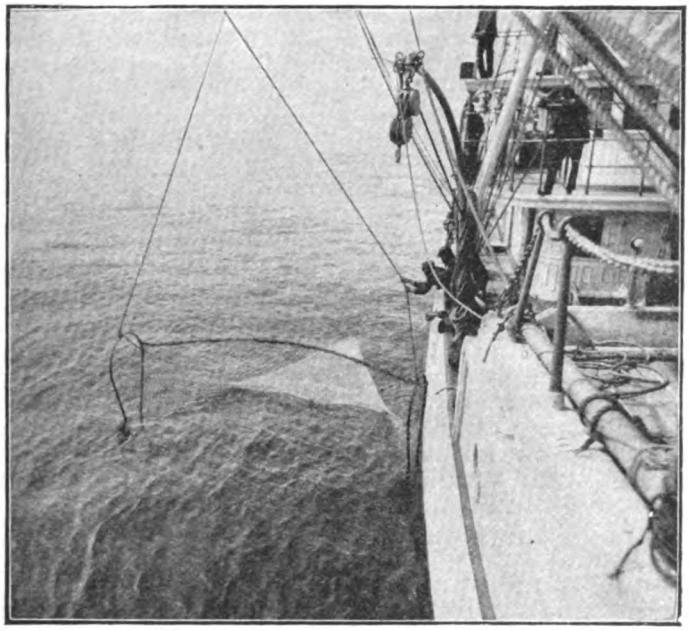
Never was there an animal so lacking in any immediate usefulness as the crinoid. It cannot move, it has no eyes, it makes no attack, and it does no harm. It simply eats, playing the part of universal scavenger of the seas, catching all food that falls through the waters, animal and vegetable, in its ten or more waving arms, each of which has a long groove lined with propulsive hairs, that work the food along in the manner of a moving stairway to a central mouth and stomach. This stomach lies between the bases of the arms, which rest either upon a long stalk or upon two or three dozen legs that cling fast to rocks or other animals, or spread out upon the surface of the mud. The crinoid is perhaps the only creature in the sea that is not desired as food by some other creature; but these animal lilies which eat everything are not themselves to be eaten, being too brittle, too full of lime—all skeleton, as it were. Even the stomach of a crinoid has its own skeleton.

In the midst of gorgeous submarine forests and waving gardens that fringe the reefs of the ocean floor and spread over its vast plains are abundant clusters of shining trees or bushes known as sea-feathers or sea-pens, these also being animals, not vegetables. Their long stems glow with a dull phosphorescent light when the trawl nets bring them up from the depths, and if they are touched with ammonia they shine brightly. It is thought that their light is dulled through their fright in capture, and it is probable that normally they give forth a brilliant radiance when they desire to attract their prey or to terrify their enemies.

I asked Dr. Clark if fishes have good hearing, and he replied that they have an auditory apparatus, although they lack external ears. And some fishes utter sounds

that can be heard under the water. The squirrel-fish makes a noise like a squirrel chewing on a nut, the drum-fish produce a drumming sound, the "grunts" a grunting sound, and laboratory experiments at Woods Hole and elsewhere have shown that fishes react unmistakably to sounds about them.

As to the range of vision in fishes, little is definitely known, except that some species, like sharks, have very keen eyesight, while others seem to get on excellently, perhaps by feeling, in dark or muddy waters where eye-



THE "ALBATROSS," WITH ITS HUGE TRAWL-NET, WHICH, WEIGHTED BY A FIVE-HUNDRED-POUND BALL, IS LOWERED FROM TWO TO FOUR MILES INTO THE OCEAN TO CATCH THE STRANGE CREATURES OF THE DEEP. NO OTHER SHIP IN THE WORLD HAS TRAVELLED SO WIDELY OR INTO SUCH REMOTE CORNERS OF THE EARTH.

sight can little serve them. It is certain that the depths of the ocean, all below an upper mile or so, are wrapped in absolute darkness. No ray of light from the sun ever penetrates there. Everywhere is utter blackness, so that photographic plates may be exposed for hours and not be affected.

The fish brought up from this abyss are small in size and black or red in colour, red being actinically the equivalent of black. And many of these bottom-of-the-ocean fish are blind. One might imagine that all of them would be blind in a region of perpetual night, but such is not the case. Some fish in these great depths have eyes, and use them most effectively, as will presently appear.

There has been discussion as to how the blind fish get their food, and it has been suggested that they may live on the mud at the ocean bottom, which, to a depth of three or four miles, is rich in organic matter that sifts down ceaselessly from the areas above. Various bottom-dwelling sea-urchins and starfish live on this nutritive mud, and blind fish may live in the same way.

Let us consider the deep-sea fish that are not blind, and see what use these dwellers in darkness make of their eyesight. An answer to this puzzle was furnished a few years ago by a scientist, Lieutenant Bourée, associated with the Prince of Monaco in the deep-sea exploration cruises to which Prince Albert has long been devoted. It was in early summer, and the oceanographic steam yacht, either the *Hirondelle* or the *Princess Alice*, with its force of scientists and its elaborate hauling apparatus, was steaming along through the mid-Atlantic, when Lieutenant Bourée, a young enthusiast, resolved to test a theory of his own touching creatures of the deep, a new theory that would have been laughed at by oceanographers had he laid it before them. The accepted idea at this time was that the deep ocean was populated throughout its surface-sunlit layer and also at the bottom, but that the intermediate region contained no life.

Lieutenant Bourée could not understand this. He did not believe it. It did not seem reasonable to him that this immense water space, tens of thousands of cubic miles, comprising the half-way-down area, should be barren of life. And without consulting his fellow-scientists, without asking permission of the Prince of Monaco, he proceeded to a practical demonstration. It was only necessary to lower the trawls down to this middle region, say to a depth of two miles or so, and let them drag there for a time, and see what they brought up, or if they brought up anything.

The lieutenant selected for this experiment an evening when he knew that a gala dinner would keep the company below in the saloon for several hours. During this time the trawls were busy, and at an auspicious moment their contents were spread before the astonished gaze of the ruler and his guests. This settled the question. There, wriggling on the deck, were bushels of fish from the middle-depth region, where no fish were supposed to exist, and among these the experts recognized strange specimens from the lowest levels, fish that were believed never to rise from the abyss ; yet here they were. On this particular evening they had certainly risen a mile or two ; there was no doubt of it ; there was no mistake as to the level at which the trawl-nets had been dragged. I have this story from an oceanographer connected with the New York Aquarium.

Similar experiments by Professor Agassiz on the *Albatross*, and by other oceanographers, have clearly demonstrated that various species of deep-dwelling fish practise an up and down migration from the lowest depths, where they pass the day, a mile or two beneath the surface, to higher levels of the ocean, half a mile, or a mile, or two miles higher, to which levels they rise at night. This seems to be their regular scheme of existence, up at night, down in the daytime. Some of these deep dwellers, when darkness falls, ascend almost to the ocean surface, and then, having accomplished their purpose, descend again.

What is their purpose ? It is the simple and natural one of getting food for themselves, food being more abundant in the upper levels than in the depths. And they come up at night because many of the fierce, top-dwelling fish, swift darting mackerel, for instance, are unable to see at night, which leaves the slow and puny depth dwellers free to feed on small shrimps, crustaceans, fish larvæ, etc., that float abundantly at and near the surface, whereas in daylight they themselves would be devoured by their powerful enemies. These upward migrators from the depths have enormous eyes, which, doubtless, enable them to see perfectly in the moon and star light diffused through the upper levels, that must seem to them brilliantly illuminated after the utter darkness below.

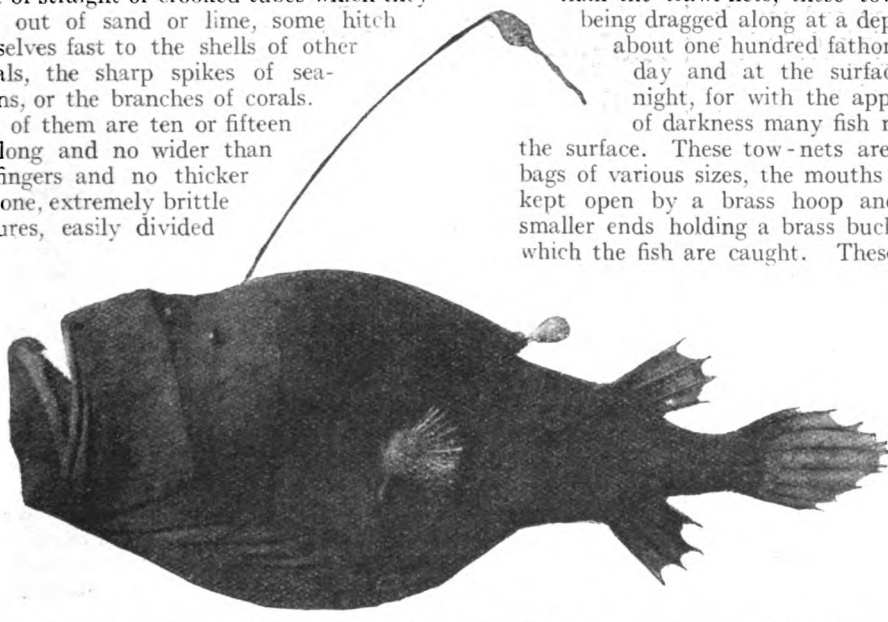
Among the strangest of these ascending night feeders are the lantern fish, weak little creatures, but remarkable for this—that their bodies are dotted over with electric lights, certain round phosphorescent spots arranged in rows along the sides that glow brilliantly, just as fireflies glow, especially a large spot on the end of their noses that shines like a searchlight. So these queer fish move through the water, ascending and descend ng, small submarines, all ablaze. There may be a double usefulness in these phosphorescent lights which flare up suddenly against a deep-sea enemy and frighten him away, or which lure the prey at higher levels as a candle lures the moth.

The potency of light in attracting wanderers of the deep is seen in the equipment of the lure-fish, a grotesque creature with a huge mouth that hides its black body in the mud and waits patiently for victims, dangling before them a phosphorescent bulb that shines at the end of a long filament—a self-grown and self-baited fishing-rod curving forward from the animal's head and hanging temptingly before its hungry jaws, ready to snap open at the approach of a curious visitor. These lure-fish are found at the depth of three miles or more.

Perhaps Nature's most fantastic creation among fish that tempt their prey by means of phosphorescent light is the wonder-fish, with its snare mouth—*Thaumatichthys Pagidostomus*—a brand-new discovery brought up by the *Albatross* during her Philippine cruises from a depth of nearly a mile off the island of Celebes. The *Thaumatichthys Pagidostomus* —oceanographers spend hours naming these creatures—is remarkable for its sombre ugliness, for its two tiny eyes so near the corners of its mouth that they seem in danger of being swallowed, and for the enormous size of this mouth, which opens like an elastic cavern, and is provided with large hinged and hooked teeth that fold back against the jaws to allow easy entrance of the prey and then swing forward, once the prey is inside, to bar escape. Most extraordinary of all is a phosphorescent bulb in the roof of the mouth that shines brilliantly when this wonder-fish spreads its jaws, and that serves to attract victims.

Among prized captures of the trawl-nets

are many beautifully-formed and gorgeously coloured little creatures that might properly be called opals of the sea, but really come under the homely classification of sea-worms. Some swim in the ocean, some live on the rocks inside of straight or crooked tubes which they make out of sand or lime, some hitch themselves fast to the shells of other animals, the sharp spikes of sea-urchins, or the branches of corals. Some of them are ten or fifteen feet long and no wider than two fingers and no thicker than one, extremely brittle creatures, easily divided into fragments that go on living as separate worms.



THIS FISH WAS CAUGHT TEN THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTEEN FEET UNDER WATER. HE LURES HIS PREY BY MEANS OF THE ILLUMINATED BULB SEEN ABOVE THE BODY. THIS BULB HE LOWERS OVER HIS HEAD AND SUSPENDS IN FRONT OF HIS MOUTH, THUS ATTRACTING HIS PREY TO DESTRUCTION.

Each haul of the nets brings up some deep-sea wonder. It may be the hideous viper-fish, with teeth so long that they fold outside of his mouth like the tusks of a wild boar; or the snipe eel, with a bill like its namesake and a body like a length of whipcord; or the queer pelican-fish, that will swallow a fish much larger than itself and somehow digest it; or a dead ribbon-fish with its almost transparent body, twenty feet long and a foot wide and half an inch thick; or a great red jelly-fish full of poisonous darts coiled up in its body and ready to shoot out their venom against any touch.

I asked Dr. Clark if oceanographers can throw any light on the sea-serpent legend.

"Certainly we can," he said. "Ordinarily it takes two basking sharks to make one sea-serpent. These sharks are forty or fifty feet long, and they travel in pairs, male and female, line ahead, close together, both showing above the water a length of tail and dorsal fin. The sight of two such creatures, swimming tandem, might easily suggest the convolutions of some huge *single* unclassified sea monster.

For fishing in the upper ocean levels the *Albatross* uses tow-nets considerably smaller than the trawl-nets, these tow-nets being dragged along at a depth of about one hundred fathoms by day and at the surface by night, for with the approach of darkness many fish rise to the surface. These tow-nets are long bags of various sizes, the mouths being kept open by a brass hoop and the smaller ends holding a brass bucket in which the fish are caught. These nets are let down from boat booms on either side of the deck, and drag along thirty or forty feet behind the vessel.

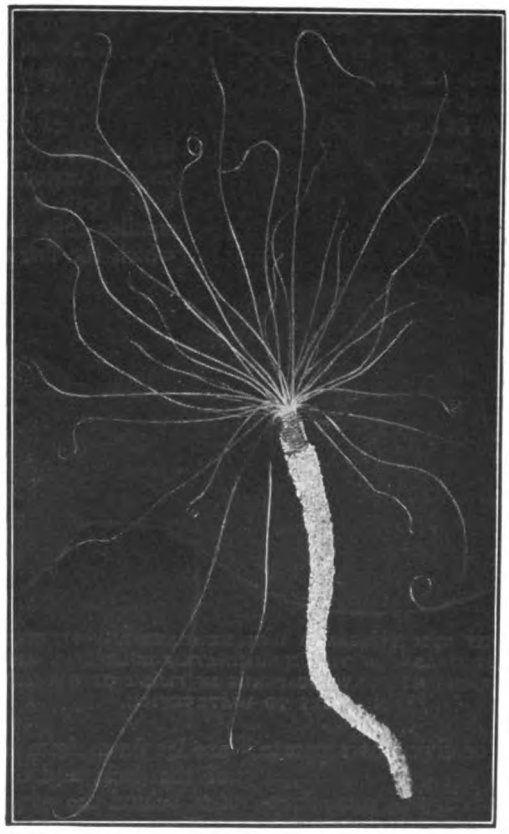
However eager for new specimens he may be, the experienced oceanographer is extremely careful in his handling of the white enamelled pan into which the contents of the tow-net are emptied. There may be dangers here unsuspected by the novice. Even a poor haul of a few red shrimps and wriggling black fish in a snarl of slimy seaweed may have its dangers. The slime on the seaweed, for instance, may have come from a mos poisonous jelly-fish known as the Portuguese man-o'-war, that has stung to death many a valiant swimmer with its ten-foot streamers that paralyze the body.

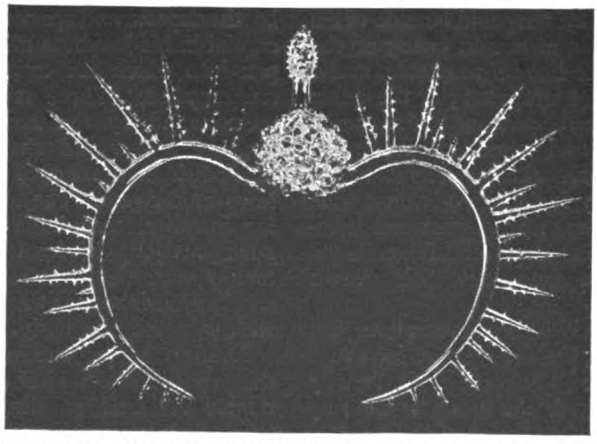
Another danger lurking in the tow-nets is the possible presence of a strange crustacean related to a crab, an uncanny creature about three inches long, that is invisible, *literally invisible*, owing to the fact that its head and body, its arms, legs, and claws, are quite transparent. The presence of this animal in the receiving pan is usually indicated by

a disturbance among its visible neighbours, the shrimps and fishes, and when it is lifted out with a pair of tongs it appears like the glass model of a crab with slowly moving glass legs and glass claws. When killed this crab loses its transparency and reveals itself in a dull white colouring like the white of an egg. The *Albatross* encountered many of these invisible wrigglers while fishing in Japanese waters. It is well known that very young fish and tiny eels are quite transparent except for two black dots which mark their eyes.

Dr. Clark explained to me that while many fish have an extraordinary power of adapting themselves to their backgrounds, literally changing the colours and the patterns of their skins, and thus rendering themselves invisible to enemies, there are others that seem to make themselves as conspicuous as possible, flaunting their vivid colours, one would say, darting about like flashing rainbows. This is because Nature in her profusion has given to one species a certain means of defence, and to another species a different means. Thus the brilliantly-hued mackerel fears nothing that swims, not even the savage shark, because he knows that his swiftness can save him. And in tropical waters, swarming with fish gorgeous in gayest blue and gold and scarlet, there is quite a different protection.

These jewelled beauties, swimming about rather tamely, would be helpless against ravenous pursuers were it not that they live in shallow tide pools and near coral reefs, where these pursuers dare not follow them. Why not? Because coral reefs are full of stings of the live coral creatures, stings that hurt a man's hand if he touches them and might destroy the eyes of any big fish that ventured among their tortuous arms and branches. And tide pools abound in sea-urchins with sharp barbed spines, hundreds of them, that break off in a wound, also in sea-anemones possessed of a powerful stinging apparatus, which dangers the big fish could not avoid in shallows and narrow passages, whereas the little pretty fellows, "butterflies of the sea," by some ancient instinct steer safely among them.





THESE ARE SOME OF THE QUEER OBJECTS—ALL ANIMAL LIFE—THAT LIVE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA. IT IS SUCH SPECIMENS AS THESE THAT ARE FOUND IN THE TRAWL-NET OF THE "ALBATROSS" AFTER IT IS BROUGHT UP FROM A DEPTH OF THREE OR FOUR MILES.

The *Albatross* also takes deep-sea soundings. Another regular task is making observations of the saltness of the sea, which varies greatly in different localities. Some patient statistician has calculated that if all the salt in the sea were evaporated and spread over the entire United States, it would cover them more than a mile and a half deep.

Wilton's Holiday.

By P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by Lewis Baumer.

WHEN Jack Wilton first came to Marvis Bay none of us dreamed that he was a man with a hidden sorrow in his life. There was something about the man which made the idea absurd—or would have made it absurd if he himself had not been the authority for the story. He looked so thoroughly pleased with life and with himself. He was one of those men whom you instinctively label in your mind as "strong." He was so healthy, so fit, and had such a confident, yet sympathetic, look about him that you felt, directly you saw him, that here was the one person you would have selected as the recipient of that hard-luck story of yours. You felt that his kindly strength would have been something to lean on.

As a matter of fact, it was by trying to lean on it that Spencer Clay got hold of the facts of the case; and when young Clay got hold of anything, Marvis Bay at large had it hot and fresh a few hours later; for Spencer was one of those slack-jawed youths who are constitutionally incapable of preserving a secret.

Within two hours, then, of Clay's chat with Wilton everyone in the place knew that, jolly and hearty as the new-comer might seem, there was that gnawing at his heart which made his outward cheeriness simply heroic.

Clay, it seems, who is the worst specimen of self-pitier, had gone to Wilton, in whom, as a new-comer, he naturally saw a fine fresh repository for his tales of woe, and had opened with a long yarn of some misfortune or other. I forget which it was; it might have been any one of a dozen or so which he had constantly in stock; and it is immaterial which it was. The point is that, having heard him out very politely and patiently, Wilton came back at him with a story which silenced even Clay. Spencer was equal to most things, but even he could not go on whining about how he had foozled his putt, or been snubbed at the bridge-table, or whatever it was that he was pitying himself about just then, when a man was telling him the story of a wrecked life.

"He told me not to let it go any farther," said Clay to everyone he met, "but of course it doesn't matter telling *you*. It is a thing he doesn't like to have known. He told me because he said there was something about me that seemed to extract confidences—a kind of strength, he said. You wouldn't think it to look at him, but his life is an absolute blank. Absolutely ruined, don't you know. He told me the whole thing so simply and frankly that it broke me all up. It seems that he was engaged to be married a few years ago, and on the wedding morning—absolutely on the wedding morning—the girl was taken suddenly ill, and——"

"And died?"

"And died. Died in his arms. Absolutely in his arms, old top."

"What a terrible thing!"

"Absolutely. He's never got over it. You won't let it go any farther, will you, old man?" And off sped Spencer, to tell the tale to someone else.

Everyone was terribly sorry for Wilton. He was such a good fellow, such a sportsman, and, above all, so young, that one hated the thought that, laugh as he might, beneath his laughter there lay the pain of that awful memory. He seemed so happy, too. It was only in moments of confidence, in those heart-to-heart talks when men reveal their deeper feelings, that he ever gave a hint that all was not well with him. As for example, when Ellerton, who is always in love with someone, backed him into a corner one evening and began to tell him the story of his latest affair, he had hardly begun when such a look of pain came over Wilton's face that he ceased instantly. He said afterwards that the sudden realization of the horrible break he was making hit him like a bullet, and the manner in which he turned the conversation, practically without pausing, from love to a discussion of the best method of getting out

of the bunker at the seventh hole was, in the circumstances, a triumph of tact.

Marvis Bay is a quiet place, even in the summer, and the Wilton tragedy was naturally the subject of much talk. It is a sobering thing to get a glimpse of the underlying sadness of life like that, and there was a disposition at first on the part of the community to behave in his presence in a manner reminiscent of pall-bearers at a funeral. But things soon adjusted themselves. He was outwardly so cheerful that it seemed ridiculous for the rest of us to step softly and speak with hushed voices. After all, when you came to examine it, the thing was his affair, and it was for him to dictate the lines on which it should be treated. If he elected to hide his pain under a bright smile and a laugh like that of a hyena with a more than usually keen sense of humour, our line was obviously to follow his lead.

We did so; and by degrees the fact that his life was permanently blighted became almost a legend. At the back of our minds we were aware of it, but it did not obtrude itself into the affairs of every day. It was only when someone—forgetting, as Ellerton had done—tried to enlist his sympathy for some misfortune of his own that the look of pain in his eyes and the sudden tightening of his lips reminded us that he still remembered.

Matters had been at this stage for perhaps two weeks, when Mary Campbell arrived.

Sex attraction is so purely a question of the taste of the individual that the wise man never argues about it. He accepts its vagaries as part of the human mystery, and leaves it at that. To me there was no charm whatever about Mary Campbell. It may have been that, at the moment, I was in love with Grace Bates, Heloise Miller, and Clarice Wembly—for at Marvis Bay in the summer a man who is worth his salt is more than equal to three love affairs simultaneously—but, anyway, she left me cold. Not one thrill could she awake in me. She was small and, to my mind, insignificant. Some men said that she had fine eyes. They seemed to me just ordinary eyes. And her hair was just ordinary hair. In fact, ordinary was the word that described her.

But from the first it was plain that she seemed wonderful to Wilton. Which was all the more remarkable, seeing that he was the one man of us all who could have got any girl in Marvis Bay that he wanted. When a man is six foot high, is a combination of Hercules and Apollo, and plays tennis, golf, and the banjo with almost superhuman vim, his path with the girls of a summer seaside resort is pretty smooth. But when you add to all these things a tragedy like Wilton's, he can only be described as having a walk-over.

"AT THE MOMENT I WAS IN LOVE WITH GRACE BATES, HELOISE MILLER, AND CLARICE WEMBLY."

Girls love a tragedy—at least, most girls do. It makes a man interesting to them. Grace Bates was always on about how interesting Wilton was; so was Heloise Miller, so was Clarice Wembly. But it was not until Mary Campbell came that he displayed any real enthusiasm at all for the feminine element of Marvis Bay. We put it down to the fact that he could not forget; but the real reason, I now know, was that he considered that girls were a nuisance on the links and in the tennis court. I suppose a plus two golfer and a Wildingesque tennis player, such as Wilton was, does feel like that. Personally, I think that girls add to the fun of the thing. But then my handicap is twelve, and, though I have been playing tennis for many years, I doubt if I have got my first serve—the fast one—over the net more than half-a-dozen times.

But Mary Campbell overcame Wilton's prejudices in twenty-four hours. He seemed to feel lonely on the links without her, and he positively egged her to be his partner in the doubles. What Mary thought of him we did not know. She was one of those inscrutable girls.

And so things went on. If it had not been that I knew Wilton's story, I should have classed the thing as one of those summer love affairs to which the Marvis Bay air is so peculiarly conducive. The only reason why anyone comes away from a summer at Marvis Bay unbetrothed is because there are so many girls that he falls in love with that his holiday is up before he can, so to speak, concentrate.

But in Wilton's case this was out of the question. A man does not get over the sort of blow he had had—not, at any rate, for many years: and we had gathered that his tragedy was comparatively recent.

I doubt if I was ever more astonished in my life than the night when he confided in me.

Why he should have chosen me as a confidant, I cannot say. I am inclined to think that I happened to be alone with him at the psychological moment when a man must confide in somebody or burst, and Wilton chose the lesser evil.

I was strolling along the shore after dinner, smoking a cigar, and thinking of Grace Bates, Heloise Miller, and Clarice Wembly, when I happened upon him. It was a beautiful night, and we sat down and drank it in for a while. The first intimation I had that all was not well with him was when he suddenly emitted a hollow groan.

The next moment he had begun to confide.

"I'm in the deuce of a hole," he said. "What would *you* do in my position?"

"Yes?" I said.

"I proposed to Mary Campbell this evening."

"Congratulations."

"Thanks. She refused me."

"Refused you!"

"Yes—because of Amy."

It seemed to me that the narrative required foot-notes.

"Who is Amy?" I said.

"Amy is the girl."

"Which girl?"

"The girl who died, you know. Mary had got hold of the whole story. In fact, it was the tremendous sympathy she showed that encouraged me to propose. If it hadn't been for that, I shouldn't have had the nerve. I'm not fit to black her shoes."

Odd, the poor opinion a man always has, when he is in love, of his personal attractions. There were times, when I thought of Grace Bates, Heloise Miller, and Clarice Wembly, when I felt like one of the beasts that perish. But then I'm nothing to write home about, whereas the smallest gleam of intelligence should have told Wilton that he was a kind of "Ouida" guardsman.

"This evening I managed somehow to do it. She was tremendously nice about it—said she was very fond of me, and all that, but it was quite out of the question because of Amy."

"I don't follow. What did she mean?"

"It's perfectly clear, if you bear in mind that Mary is the most sensitive, spiritual, highly-strung girl that ever—drew breath," said Wilton, a little coldly. "Her position is this. She feels that, because of Amy, she can never have my love completely. Between us there would always be Amy's memory. It would be the same as if she married a widower."

"Well, widowers marry."

"They don't marry girls like Mary."

I couldn't help feeling that this was a bit of luck for the widowers; but I didn't say so. One has always got to remember that opinions differ about girls. One man's peach, so to speak, is another man's poison. I have met men who d dn't like Grace Bates—men who, if Heloise Miller or Clarice Wembly had given them their photographs, would have used them to cut the pages of a novel.

"Amy stands between us," said Wilton.

I breathed a sympathetic snort. I couldn't think of anything noticeably suitable to say.

"Stands between us," repeated Wilton.

"And the silly part of the whole thing is that there isn't any Amy. I invented her."

"You—what?"

"Invented her. Made her up. No, I'm not mad. I had a reason. Let me see—you come from London, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Then you haven't any friends. It's different with me. I live in a small country town, and everyone's my friend. I don't know what it is about me, but for some reason, ever since I can remember, I've been looked on as the Strong Man of my town, the man who's *all right*. Am I making myself clear?"

"Not quite."

"Well, what I am trying to get at is this. Either because I'm a strong sort of fellow to look at, and have obviously never been sick in my life, or because I can't help looking pretty cheerful, the whole of Bridley-in-the-Wold seems to take it for granted that I can't possibly have any troubles of my own, and that I am consequently fair game for anyone who has any sort of worry. I have the sympathetic manner, and they come to me to be cheered up. If a fellow's in love, he makes a bee-line for me and tells me all about it. If anyone has had a bereavement, I am the rock on which he leans for support. Well, I'm a patient sort of man, and, as far as Bridley-in-the-Wold is concerned, I am willing to play the part. But a Strong Man does need an occasional holiday, and I made up my mind that I would get it. Directly I got here I saw that the same old game was going to start. Spencer Clay swooped down on me at once. I'm as big a draw with the Spencer Clay type of maudlin idiot as catnip is with a cat. Well, I could stand it at home, but I was hanged if I was going to have my holiday spoiled. So I invented Amy. Now do you see?"

"Certainly I see. And I perceive something else which you appear to have overlooked. If Amy doesn't exist—or, rather, never did exist—she cannot stand between you and Miss Campbell. Tell her what you have told me, and all will be well."

"IF A FELLOW'S IN LOVE, HE MAKES A BEE-LINE FOR ME AND TELLS ME ALL ABOUT IT."

He shook his head.

"You don't know Mary. She would never forgive me. You don't know what sympathy, what angelic sympathy, she has poured out on me about Amy. I can't possibly tell her the whole thing was a fraud. It would make her feel so foolish."

"You must risk it. At the worst, you lose nothing."

He brightened a little.

"No, that's true," he said; "I've half a mind to do it."

"Make it a whole mind," I said, "and you win out."

I was wrong. Sometimes I am. The trouble was, apparently, that I "didn't know Mary." I am sure Grace Bates, Heloise Miller, or Clarice Wembly would not have acted as she did. They might have been a trifle stunned at first, but they would soon have come round, and all would have been joy. But with Mary, no. What took place at the interview I do not know; but it was swiftly perceived by Marvis Bay that the Wilton-Campbell alliance was off. They no longer walked together, golfed together, and played tennis on the same side of the net. They did not even speak to each other.

The rest of the story I can speak of only from hearsay. How it became public property I do not know. But there was a confiding strain in Wilton, and I imagine he confided in someone, who confided in someone else. At any rate, it is recorded in Marvis Bay's unwritten archives, from which I now extract it.

For some days after the breaking-off of diplomatic relations Wilton seemed too pulverized to resume the offensive. He mooned about the links by himself, playing a shocking game, and generally comported himself like a man who has looked for the escape of gas with a lighted candle. In affairs of love the strongest men generally behave with the most spineless lack of resolution. Wilton weighed thirteen stone, and his muscles were like steel cables, but he

could not have shown less pluck in this crisis in his life if he had been a poached egg. It was pitiful to see him.

Mary, in these days, simply couldn't see that he was on the earth. She looked round him, above him, and through him—but never at him. Which was rotten from Wilton's point of view, for he had developed a sort of wistful expression—I am convinced that he practised it before the mirror after his bath—which should have worked wonders if only he could have got action with it. But she avoided his eye as if he had been a creditor whom she was trying to slide past on the street.

She irritated me. To let the breach widen in this way was absurd. Wilton, when I said as much to him, said that it was due to her wonderful sensitiveness and highly-strungness, and that it was just one more proof to him of the loftiness of her soul and her shrinking horror of any form of deceit. In fact, he gave me the impression that, though the affair was rending his vitals, he took a mournful pleasure in contemplating her perfection.

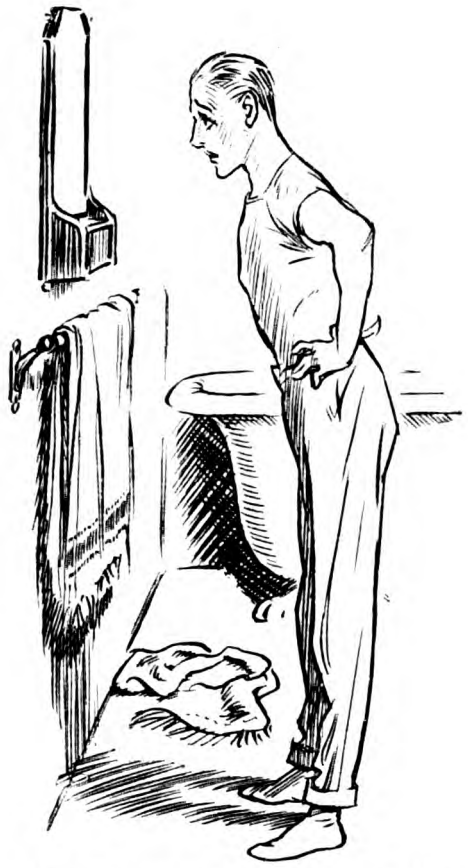
Now, one afternoon Wilton took his misery for a long walk along the seashore. He tramped over the sand for some considerable time, and finally pulled up in a little cove, backed by high cliffs and dotted with rocks. The shore around Marvis Bay is full of them.

By this time the afternoon sun had begun to be too warm for comfort, and it struck Wilton that he could be a great deal more comfortable nursing his wounded heart with his back against one of the rocks than tramping any farther over the sand. Most of the Marvis Bay scenery is simply made as a setting for the nursing of a wounded heart. The cliffs are a sombre indigo, sinister and forbidding, and even on the finest days the sea has a curious sullen look. You have only to get away from the crowd near the bathing machines and reach one of these small coves and get your back against a rock and your pipe well alight, and you can simply wallow in misery. I have done it myself. The day when Heloise Miller went golfing with Teddy Bingley I spent the whole afternoon in one of these retreats. It is true that, after twenty minutes of contemplating the breakers, I fell asleep; but that is bound to happen.

It happened to Wilton. For perhaps half an hour he brooded, and then his pipe fell from his mouth and he dropped off into a peaceful slumber. And time went by.

It was a touch of cramp that finally woke him. He jumped up with a yell, and stood there massaging his calf. And he had hardly got rid of the pain, when a startled exclamation broke the primeval stillness, and there, on the other side of the rock, was Mary Campbell.

Now, if Wilton had had any inductive reasoning in his composition at all, he would have been tremendously elated. A girl does not creep out to a distant cove at Marvis Bay unless she is unhappy, and if Mary Campbell was unhappy, she must be unhappy about him, and if she was unhappy about him, all he had to do was to show a bit of determination, and get the whole thing straightened out. But Wilton, whom grief had reduced to the mental level of an oyster, did not reason this out, and the sight of her deprived him of practically all his faculties, including speech. He just stood there and yammered.



"HE HAD DEVELOPED A SORT OF WISTFUL EXPRESSION—I AM CONVINCED THAT HE PRACTISED IT BEFORE THE MIRROR AFTER HIS BATH."

"Did you follow me here, Mr. Wilton?" said Mary, very coldly.

He shook his head. Eventually he managed to say that he had come there by chance, and had fallen asleep under the rock. As this was exactly what Mary had done, she could not reasonably complain. So that concluded the conversation for the time being. She walked away in the direction of Marvis Bay without another word, and presently he lost sight of her round a bend in the cliffs.

His position now was exceedingly unpleasant. If she had such a distaste for his presence, common decency made it imperative that he should give her a good start on the homeward journey. He could not tramp along a couple of yards in the rear all the way. So he had to remain where he was till she had got well off the mark, and as he was wearing a thin flannel suit, and the sun had gone in, and a chilly breeze had sprung up, his mental troubles were practically swamped in physical discomfort.

Just as he had decided that he could now make a move, he was surprised to see her coming back.

Wilton really was elated at this. The construction he put on it was that she had relented, and was coming back to fling her arms round his neck. He was just bracing himself for the clash, when he caught her eye, and it was as cold and unfriendly as the sea.

"THERE, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE

"I must go round the other way," she said. "The water has come up too far on that side."

And she walked past him to the other end of the cove.

The prospect of another wait chilled Wilton to the marrow. The wind had now grown simply freezing, and it came through his thin suit and roamed about all over him in a manner that caused him exquisite discomfort. He began to jump to keep himself warm.

He was leaping heavenwards for the hundredth time, when, chancing to glance to one side, he perceived Mary again returning. By this time his physical misery had so completely overcome the softer emotions in his bosom that his only feeling now was one of thorough irritation. It was not fair, he felt, that she should jockey at the start in this way and keep him hanging about here catching cold. He looked at her when she came within range quite balefully.

"It is impossible," she said, "to get round that way either."

One grows so accustomed in this world to everything going smoothly, that the idea of actual danger had not yet come home to her. From where she stood, in the middle of the cove, the sea looked so distant that the fact that it had closed the only ways of getting out

ROCK, WAS MARY CAMPBELL."

was at the moment merely annoying. She felt much the same as she would have felt if she had arrived at a station to catch a train and had been told that the train was not running.

She therefore seated herself on a rock and contemplated the ocean. Wilton walked up and down. Neither showed any disposition to exercise that gift of speech which places man in a class of his own, above the ox, the ass, the common wart-hog, and the rest of the lower animals. It was only when a wave swished over the base of her rock that Mary broke the silence.

"The tide is coming *in*," she faltered.

She looked at the sea with such altered feelings that it seemed a different sea altogether.

There was plenty of it to look at. It filled the entire mouth of the little bay, swirling up the sand, and lashing among the rocks in a fashion which made one thought stand out above all the others in her mind—the recollection that she could not swim.

"Mr. Wilton."

Wilton bowed coldly.

"Mr. Wilton, the tide — it's coming *in*."

Wilton glanced superciliously at the sea.

"So," he said, "I perceive."

"But what shall we do?"

Wilton shrugged his shoulders. He was feeling at war with Nature and humanity combined. The wind had shifted a few points to the east, and was exploring his anatomy with the skill of a qualified surgeon.

"We shall drown," cried Miss Campbell. "We shall drown! We shall drown! We shall drown!"

All Wilton's resentment left him. Until he heard that pitiful wail, his only thoughts had been for himself.

"Mary," he said, with a wealth of love and tenderness in his voice.

She came to him as a little child comes to its mother, and he put his arm around her.

"Oh, Jack!"

"My darling!"

"I'm frightened!"

"My precious!"

It is in moments of peril, when the chill breath of fear blows upon our souls, clearing them of pettiness, that we find ourselves.

She looked about her wildly.

"Could we climb the cliffs?"

"I doubt it."

"If we called for help——"

"We could do that."

They raised their voices, but the only

answer was the crashing of the waves and the cry of the sea-birds. The water was swirling at their feet, and they drew back to the shelter of the cliffs. There they stood in silence, watching.

"Mary," said Wilton, in a low voice, "tell me one thing."

"Yes, Jack?"

"Have you forgiven me?"

"Forgiven you! How can you ask at a moment like this? I love you with all my heart and soul."

He kissed her, and a strange look of peace came over his face.

"I am happy."

"I too."

A fleck of foam touched her face, and she shivered.

"It was worth it," he said, quietly. "If all misunderstandings are cleared away and nothing can come between us again, it is a small price to pay—unpleasant as it will be when it comes."

"Perhaps—perhaps it will not be very unpleasant. They say that drowning is an easy death."

"I didn't mean drowning, dearest. I meant a cold in the head."

"A cold in the head!"

He nodded gravely.

"I don't see how it can be avoided. You know how chilly it gets these late summer nights. It will be a long time before we can get away."

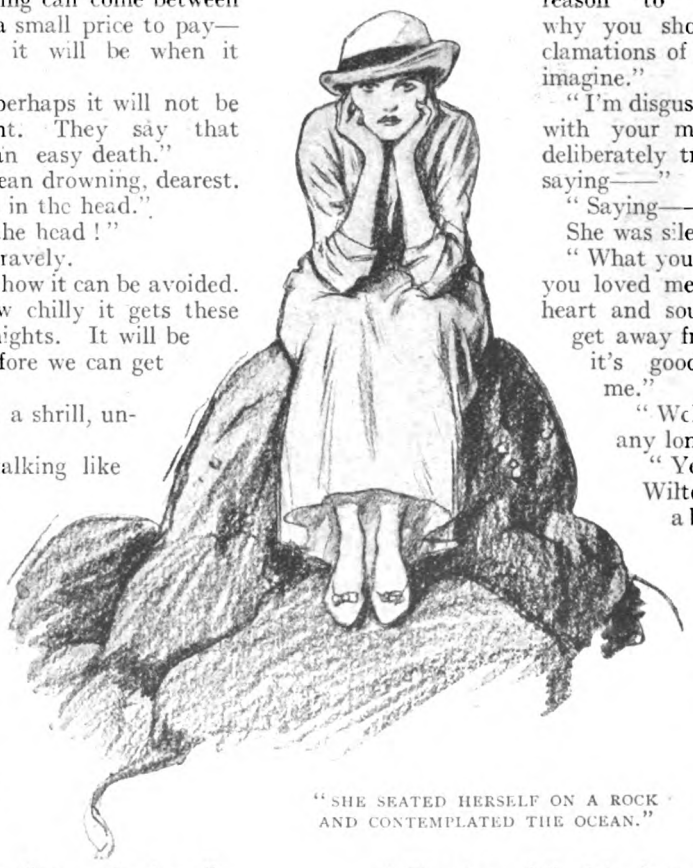
She laughed a shrill, unnatural laugh.

"You are talking like this to keep my courage up. You know in your heart that there is no hope for us. Nothing can save us now. The water will come creeping—creeping—"

"Let it creep! It can't get past that rock there."

"What do you mean?"

"It can't. The tide doesn't come up any farther. I know, because I was caught here last week."



"SHE SEATED HERSELF ON A ROCK AND CONTEMPLATED THE OCEAN."

For a moment she stood looking at him without speaking. Then she uttered a cry in which relief, surprise, and indignation were so nicely blended that it would have been impossible to say which predominated.

He was eyeing the approaching waters with an indulgent smile.

"Why didn't you tell me?" she cried.

"I did tell you."

"You know what I mean. Why did you let me go on thinking we were in danger, when——?"

"We *were* in danger. We shall probably get pneumonia."

"Isch!"

"There! You're sneezing already."

"I am not sneezing. That was an exclamation of disgust."

"It sounded like a sneeze. It must have been, for you've every reason to sneeze; but why you should utter exclamations of disgust I can't imagine."

"I'm disgusted with you—with your meanness. You deliberately tricked me into saying——"

"Saying——?"

She was silent.

"What you said was that you loved me with all your heart and soul. You can't get away from that, and it's good enough for me."

"Well, it's not true any longer."

"Yes, it is," said Wilton, comfortably, "bless it."

"It is not. I'm going right away now, and I shall never speak to you again."

She moved away from him and prepared to sit down.

"There's a jelly-fish just where you're going to sit," said Wilton.

"I don't care."

"It will. I speak from experience, as one on whom you have sat so often."

"I'm not amused."

"Have patience. I can be funnier than that."

"Please don't talk to me."

"Very well."

She seated herself with her back to him. Dignity demanded reprisals, so he seated himself with his back to her; and the futile ocean raged towards them, and the wind grew chillier every minute.

"THE FUTILE OCEAN RAGED TOWARDS THEM, AND THE WIND GREW CHILLIER EVERY MINUTE."

Time passed. Darkness fell. The little bay became a black cavern, dotted here and there with white, where the breeze whipped the surface of the water.

Wilton sighed. It was lonely sitting there all by himself. How much jollier it would have been if——

A hand touched his shoulder, and a voice spoke—meekly.

"Jack, dear, it—it's awfully cold. Don't you think if we were to—snuggle up——?"

He reached out, and folded her in an embrace which aroused the professional enthusiasm of Hackenschmidt and drawn guttural congratulations from Zbysco. She creaked, but did not crack, beneath the strain.

"That's much nicer," she said, softly. "Jack, I don't think the tide's started even to think of going down yet."

"I hope not," said Wilton.

Feats of Strength Made Easy.

By W. BANQUIER.

In the following article, specially written for "The Strand Magazine," Mr. W. Banquier, better known in the world of physical culture as "Apollo," describes many effective "feats of strength" which can actually be performed, with a little practice, by any and every man possessed of an average physique. Mr. Banquier, who has been a student of physical culture since his early boyhood, is well known in the sporting world as an able exponent of, and writer on, physical culture. He first popularized the science of ju-jitsu in this country, and, in addition to holding records for many genuine feats of strength, is also a capable amateur boxer and all-round athlete. Photographs by Hugh Cecil.

THERE are, I think, no tricks quite so impressive to those "not in the know" as what perhaps can best be described as "feats of strength" tricks, for the simple reason that the very nature of an apparently phenomenal display of strength disarms suspicion. "Surely," says the onlooker, "this must be genuine; for it is obviously impossible for a man of average strength to assume a power he does not possess."

As a matter of fact, however, an almost lifelong study of the many and varied forms of physical culture has convinced me that this is not the case at all, for there exist quite a number of impressive feats which suggest that the performer must be possessed of almost supernatural strength, when, as a matter of fact, the said feats, tricks—call them what you will—can be accomplished in any drawing-room by anyone and everyone of average physical development — always providing, of course, that he — and, in many cases, one might say she with equal truth—has learnt those wrinkles which go to make an apparently difficult feat really perfectly simple.

In searching through my repertoire of tricks of this description which I shall explain in this article, let me here say that I have selected those which, in my opinion, are the most easily learnt and yet, at the same time, the most

FIG. 1.—THE PUSH-UP EXERCISE.

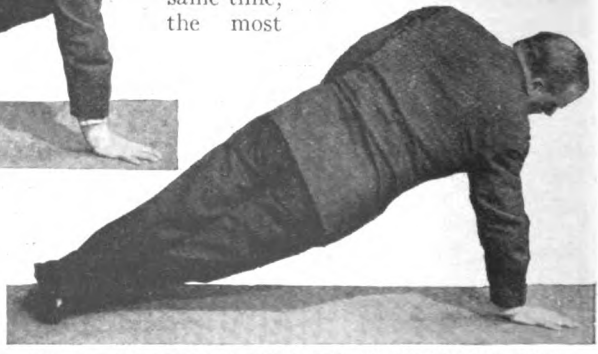


FIG. 2.—THE PUSH-UP EXERCISE—WITH CROSSED FEET.

FIG. 3.—KNOCKING A MAN'S CLENCHED FISTS APART WITH TWO FINGERS ONLY.

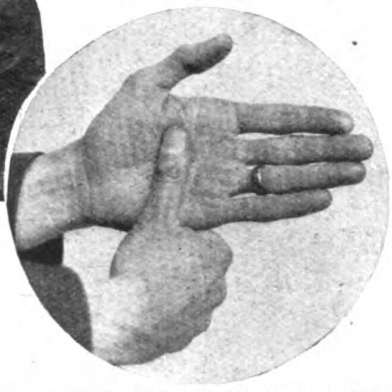


FIG. 4.—HOW THIS MAY BE FRUSTRATED.

as shown in the photograph, is a feat which can only be successfully carried out by hard practice. Note that the feet are some six to nine inches apart.

By crossing the feet, however (Fig. 2), instead of spreading the feet apart, as in the first illustration, this one-hand push-up can be performed by almost anyone after two or three tries. The fact that the feet are crossed, thereby very considerably aiding the performer's power of leverage, will never be noticed by those who have not learnt the trick, and, in consequence, by indulging in this simple little device the man who has probably never devoted even five minutes a day to

FIG. 5.

FIG. 7.

mysterious to those who have not studied the "illusionary" side of feats of strength.

The first illustration (Fig. 1) demonstrates what is called the "Push-Up Exercise," which, by the way, enters into all Swedish movements, and is commonly practised by athletes in training, but is, of course, performed, as a rule, with two hands upon the floor instead of one, for to push up on one hand,

FIG. 6.

THE THREE STAGES OF A VERY EFFECTIVE WEIGHT-LIFTING TRICK.

strengthening his muscular development will be able to perform a feat which, it is well known, can, when strictly carried out to rule, only be successfully accomplished by the very strong.

The following little trick—it is a trick pure and simple—I have never known fail to create considerable interest among

FIG. 8.—TO LIFT AND CARRY TWO TWELVE-STONE MEN IS AN EASY MATTER—

those who do not know how it is done, and, after all, a trick explained is a trick robbed of all its illusionary merit. Illustration 3 shows how even a child using two fingers only could knock the strongest man's clenched fists apart.

Illustration 4 shows precisely why, when he tried to knock my fists apart, my partner in this little trick entirely failed to move them, the reason, of course, being, as shown in the photograph, that when I clenched my left fist I was grasping in it the thumb of my right hand. A lengthy experience has proved to me that the simplest tricks are often the most effective. Try this on any friend who happens to possess more than an average opinion of his strength, and you will find that you will bewilder and mystify him completely.

Can a man of nine-stone weight raise a twelve-stone man sitting on a chair, and, with one arm, lift chair and man and place him on a table?

The reply will surely be in the negative, as they say at Westminster, unless he who replies may chance to know the trick explained in this article, which shows how an apparently impossible feat can be performed after a little practice with perfect ease.

Illustration 5 describes the preliminary measures to be taken. First, ask your subject to stand sideways across the chair, then grasping the back of the chair yourself with one hand, ask him to sit down, and as he does so place your right shoulder well beneath his chest, as shown in illustration 6, at the same time pulling the chair forward on to the two front legs and hauling it in towards you with all the power you may have at your disposal.

By doing this the weight of the man on the

FIG. 9—WHEN TACKLED IN THE MANNER HERE SHOWN.

chair will be thrown forward on to the top of your shoulder, and thus, by taking a quick step forward with your right foot, if you are lifting with your right arm—by your left foot, of course, if you are lifting with your left arm—you will find it quite a simple

matter to deposit both man and chair (Fig. 7) upon an ordinary-sized table. To give the desired effect—namely, the appearance of the performance of a feat of strength—this apparently difficult but really extremely simple operation should be carried out as quickly as possible.

To raise two twelve-stone men (Fig. 8) and then lift and carry them (Fig. 9) is an equally easy matter—if you will follow out the rules here explained. First, ask the two men you propose to lift in this manner to stand on two chairs and grip each other round the neck—the one on the left encircling the neck of his partner with the left hand, which is gripped by his partner's left hand, and the one on the right encircling his right hand round his partner's neck, which is gripped in the same way by his partner's right (Fig. 9).

To raise the men and to perform the trick—I know of none more impressive—all that it is necessary to do is to keep the body perfectly straight (Fig. 9), gripping their arms in the position shown in the illustration, when, by bending the knees slightly, it will be found an easy matter to take the two men from the chairs and carry them round the room. I often think, by the way, that the learned Latin scholar who wrote "*Omne ignotum pro magnifico*" must have had this trick in mind when he propounded this truism, for to those who do not know how it is performed it represents a feat—to a man of average strength—bordering on the impossible.

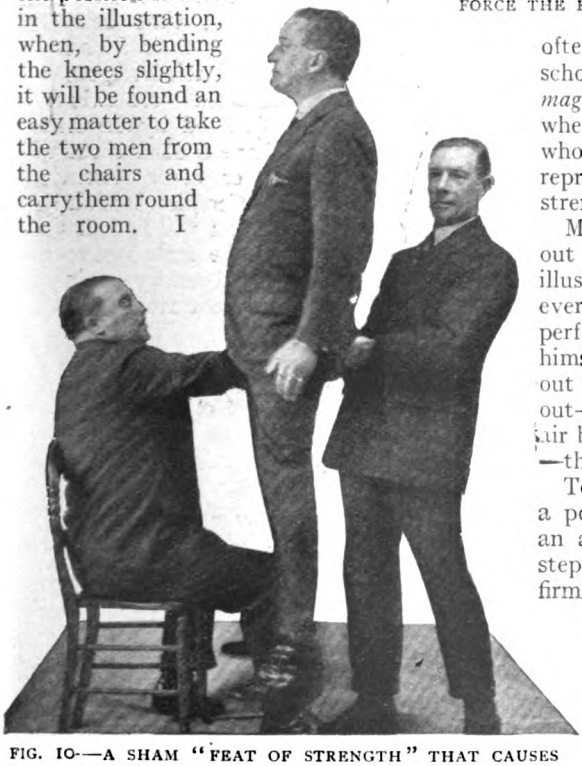


FIG. 10.—A SHAM "FEAT OF STRENGTH" THAT CAUSES MUCH AMUSEMENT.

FIG. 11.—THESE TWO MEN ARE VAINLY ENDEAVOURING TO FORCE THE ELBOWS OF THE THIRD AGAINST THE WALL.

More than a little amusement can be derived out of the "feat of strength" shown in illustration 10, for the simple reason that everyone in the audience knows how it is performed, with the exception of the subject himself. I need scarcely say that if carried out as the subject thinks it is being carried out—namely, that he is being raised in the air by one hand by a man sitting in the chair—this feat is actually a physical impossibility.

To convert the apparently impossible into a possibility it is merely necessary to have an accomplice in the audience who quietly steps up behind and grips my right hand firmly (Illustration 10) as I am about to raise the "subject" in the air—he not in the know naturally supposing that I alone am raising him to this position—and all with the might of my own strong right arm!

For two men of almost equal weight to fail to push one man's two elbows

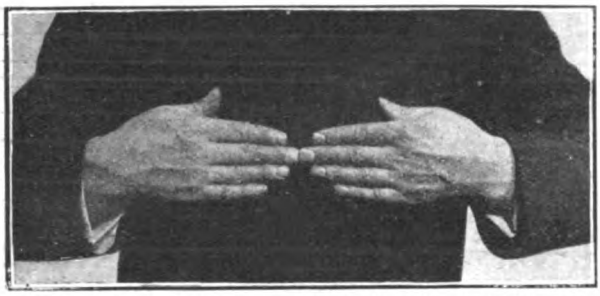


FIG. 12.—WHEN HANDS ARE HELD IN THIS POSITION IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ANYONE TO FORCE THEM APART BY GRASPING THE WRISTS.

against the wall is, in itself, suggestive of a feat exceedingly difficult of achievement. As a matter of fact, it would be impossible for any one man to do this successfully were he not to know exactly how it is done. Armed with this knowledge, however, it is simplicity itself.

All that the apparently Herculean exponent of strength has to do is to place his body perfectly upright against the wall—with back of the head, shoulders, and heels touching the wall. Then, by placing his hands on his waist, as shown in photograph 11, and by keeping the elbows well forward, he may safely ask any two men to try to push his elbows back, with the knowledge that they will inevitably fail, for when the "Hercules" is in this position they will find it the hardest task they have ever attempted to perform.

Photograph 12 shows a very similar and yet equally effective trick. Owing to the great strength of the pectoral muscles, it is a physical impossibility for even an abnormally strong man to grasp the two wrists and force apart the hands of anyone holding them in this position. Indeed, it is quite safe to say that any man of ordinary strength can defy at least one man to pull his fingers apart. In my own case, I may point out, with due humility, that on innumerable occasions I have successfully defied two men to do the same thing. And yet when you see the trick done the thought inevitably crosses your mind that the man resisting must be a veritable Samson.

Photograph 13 shows a "feat of strength" which I have never known fail to make a hit. As you will see, it demonstrates how, by placing the arm on a table, it is possible to raise a comparatively heavy man in the air, and hold him there for several seconds before the back of the hand can be pressed flat upon the table.

Let me explain at once that a man of merely ordinary strength would assuredly not be able to support a man so heavy as is the entire being of the subject whose legs you here see in the photograph. At the same time, if you will try this little feat you will be agreeably surprised at the weight you will be able to hold. I would mention that to prevent the muscles of the arms from possible bruises, it is well to place a couple of folded handkerchiefs or some soft support beneath the elbow before attempting the feat.

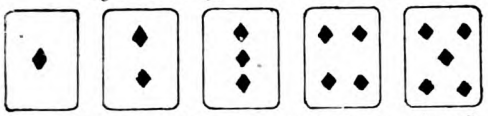
It would be a simple matter for me to explain many other "feats of strength" equally mysterious, but space presses, and, in any case, I hope and think that those demonstrated in this article will at least prove an effective means of enabling readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE of ordinary physique to gain—for the time being, at least—a reputation among their friends for suddenly having acquired reinforcements of strength from "somewhere in ——" (deleted by the Censor) which have endued them with the power of a twentieth-century Hercules. With a little practice you will find that the study of the feats I have described will easily gain for you this reputation.

FIG. 13.—RAISING A MAN IN THE AIR WITH ONE HAND.

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

256.—THE 37 PUZZLE GAME.

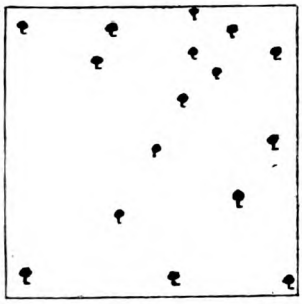


HERE is a beautiful new puzzle game, absurdly simple to play but quite fascinating. To most people it will seem to be practically a game of chance—equal for both players—but there are pretty subtleties in it, and I will show next month how to win with certainty.

Place the five cards, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, on the table. There are two players, who play alternately. The first player places a coin on any card, say the 5, which scores 5; then the second player removes the coin to another card, say to the 3, and adds that card, scoring 8; then the first player removes the coin again, say to the 1, scoring 9; and so on. The player who scores 37, or forces his opponent to score more than 37, wins. Remember, the coin must be removed to a different card at each play.

257.—THE FIVE FENCES.

A MAN owned a large square fenced-in field in which were sixteen oak trees, as depicted in the illustration. He wished, for some eccentric reason of his own, to put up five straight fences, so that every tree should be in a separate enclosure. How did he do it? Just take your pencil and draw five straight strokes across the field, so that every tree shall be fenced off from all the others.



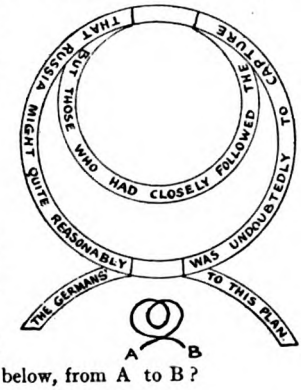
258.—THE BEHEADED DIGNITARY.

MY *first*, a dignitary highly placed,
Stood up to *second* some brave deed of war
That could not fail to *third* the men he faced;
For he of *fourth* had come back from afar,
Where, at the battle's front, he had been taught
How our brave soldiers lived and *fifth* and fought.

My *first* is a well-known word, my *second* is that word beheaded, my *third* the second word beheaded, and so on, like price, rice, ice.

259.—A MILITARY KNOT.

CAN you place a word in each of the two missing spaces so that the completed sentence may be read along the ribbon in the direction indicated below, from A to B?



260.—THE WEIGHING-MACHINE FRAUD.

FIVE children, with ingenuity worthy of a better cause, hit on the idea of getting themselves all weighed at an automatic machine at the cost of a single penny. Two of them got on the stand at the same time, and one of them changed places with another until all the ten possible pairs had been weighed. The results recorded in pounds were as follows: 114, 115, 118, 119, 121, 122, 123, 125, 126, and 129. The big brother of one of the children succeeded in working out from these figures the individual weights of the five. Can the reader do it?

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

251.—NINE MEN IN A TRENCH.

LET the men move in the following order: 2—1, 3—2, 4—3, 5—11, 6—4, 7—5, 8—6, 9—7, 1—13, 9—10, 8—9, 1—12, 7—13, 6—8, 5—7, 1—11, 4—12, 3—6, 2—5, 1—1, 2—2, 3—3, 4—4, 5—5, 6—6, 7—7, 8—8, 9—9, and the sergeant will have got to his proper place in 28 moves.

252.—A PUZZLE IN BILLIARDS.

IT is clear that A can score 100 while B makes 79; and that B can make 100 while C scores 74. Multiply 79 by 74, double and divide by 100, and we get 116·92; so C can score 117 (as there are no fractional points) while A makes 200. Therefore A can give C 82 points and win. Some would make the answer 83, and the difference depends on what view you take of that fraction. We can say with certainty that at least 82 points can safely be given.

253.—MUTUAL ACCOMMODATION.

THE diagram shows one way in which the pieces may be placed. It is not the only way.

254.—A WORD SQUARE.

O P A L S
P E T A L
A T O N E
L A N C E
S L E E T

255.—THE PRICE OF APPLES.

MARY was first offered sixteen apples for her shilling, which would be at the rate of ninepence a dozen. The two extra apples gave her eighteen for a shilling, which is at the rate of eightpence a dozen, or one penny a dozen less than the first price asked.

The IDLE FELLOW.

A RUSSIAN FAIRY TALE.

Illustrated by W. Heath Robinson.

ONCE upon a time there was a man who had three sons. The two eldest were both shrewd fellows, who had married wives, but the youngest was at once indolent and stupid, so much so that no one ever called him anything but the Dolt, or the Idle Fellow.

When the father felt his end approaching he divided his wealth between his eldest sons. Then he gave to each boy the additional sum of a hundred ducats, and died.

Said the two brothers one day to the Dolt, "Give us your hundred ducats. We are going to undertake a great journey, which will have the result of making us very wealthy, and we will bring you back a red cap, a red belt, and some red slippers. While we are away you must remain with our wives and do as they tell you."

The Dolt had coveted for a long time the things which his brothers now promised him, and he immediately handed over all his money. He then settled down at home in the company of his sisters-in-law, and, being the most idle fellow that ever was seen, spent all his time seated or stretched before the stove, never getting up except in a temper to answer a summons from the women. Indeed, the latter, in order to make him obey, were obliged to tempt him with hot soup, biscuits, or sweet wine, for otherwise he refused to do anything at all.

"Get up, idle fellow," they said to him one day. "Go and draw some water."

The Dolt did not stir. It was freezing as hard as possible, and he viewed the prospect of such a tiring job with little pleasure.

"Go and do it yourselves," he replied.

"If you hurry up, silly boy, we will give you some wine and biscuits on your return, but if you don't, we shall complain of you to our husbands when they come back, and you will get neither cap, belt, nor slippers."

The idle fellow got up, took the pitchers and a hatchet, and went down to the river, where he broke the ice and filled his buckets. Then he stood still for a moment watching the stream run by. Suddenly he saw a pike which was swimming close to the bank. He quickly plunged his arm into the river, and without any difficulty caught the fish.

"Throw me back into the water," said the pike, "and I will give you whatever you wish."

"Will you, indeed? Then I desire that whatever I wish may instantly happen."

"Very good. You have only to say, 'I desire, on the word of a pike, that such-and-such a thing may happen.'"

The Dolt agreed to set the fish at liberty, and watched it dive to the bottom of the stream.

Then he turned towards the two buckets of water.

"I desire, on the word of a pike, that these pails may transport themselves to the house forthwith."

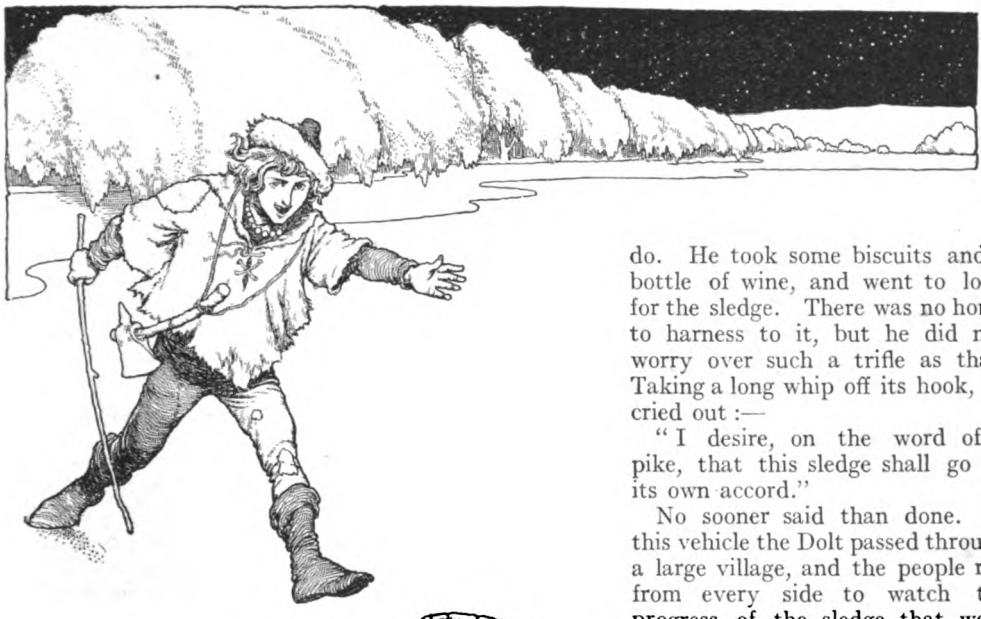
The buckets walked away immediately, and the idle fellow followed them, with a switch in his hand, driving them as if they had been geese. In this manner he returned home with not a thought in his head except to resume his place by the stove.

"Now then, idle fellow," said his sisters-in-law a moment later, "take a hatchet and go and cut some wood."

"Not I! Do it yourselves."

"If you don't go instantly we shall let the stove go out, and you will shiver with cold."

As soon as they had gone, the Dolt shifted slightly, and said, "I desire, on the word of a pike, that the wood may be cut."



Immediately the hatchet, coming out of its cupboard, dashed off to the shed and chopped the wood, and the latter came of its own accord and placed itself on the fire. All the time the idle fellow was stretched comfortably on his bench close to the stove, sleeping peacefully.

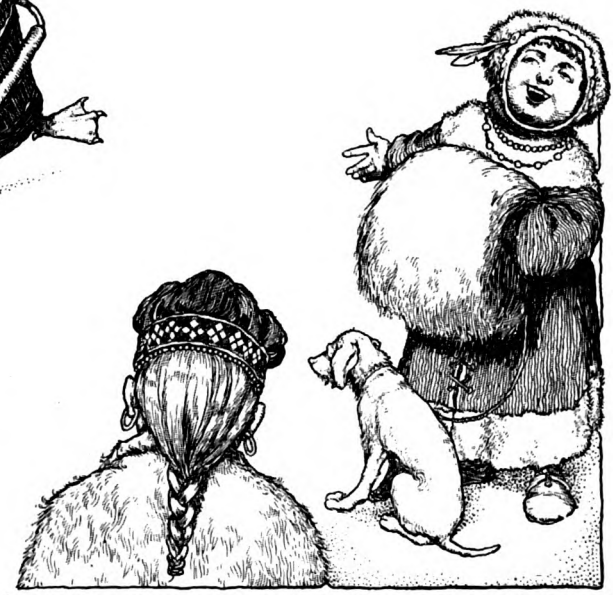
Some days later the two women again called out to the Dolt :—

"There is no more wood in the house. Go and find some in the forest."

This time the lad made no protest, being gratified by the thought that all the village would now be witness of what he could do. He took some biscuits and a bottle of wine, and went to look for the sledge. There was no horse to harness to it, but he did not worry over such a trifle as that. Taking a long whip off its hook, he cried out :—

"I desire, on the word of a pike, that this sledge shall go of its own accord."

No sooner said than done. In this vehicle the Dolt passed through a large village, and the people ran from every side to watch the progress of the sledge that went without a horse. In ever-increasing numbers they crowded round the strange carriage, plying the lad with questions, and seeking to stop him. Presently they tried his patience too far, and in order to escape their curiosity he crowded on the pace, terrifying the women



"THE BUCKETS WALKED AWAY IMMEDIATELY, AND THE IDLE FELLOW FOLLOWED THEM."

"THE STOVE DASHED OFF ALONG THE ROAD!"

and children, upsetting the dogs, and setting everybody in commotion.

When he reached the forest he took all the wood he wanted, and returned by the same road to get home. But in going through the village where, some hours earlier, he had been the cause of so much tumult, he was seized by the peasants, who stopped his sledge and took him into custody. He seemed in for an awkward time, when an idea struck him.

"I desire, on the word of a pike, that the faggots which are on my sledge shall give a drubbing to all these folk."

Instantly the sticks fell upon the backs, the shoulders, and the legs of the peasants, who ran away aghast, with howls of terror.

The idle fellow took the road again, laughing heartily, and a little while later got down before his own door.

Rumour of his exploits eventually reached the ears of the king, who was curious to become acquainted with the lad, and bade one of his captains bring the worker of miracles before him. The captain repaired to the house of the Dolt's sisters-in-law, and explained to them the purpose for which he had come.

"Here, idle fellow," cried the two women, "come out of your snug corner and be off to the king's court. Don your Sunday clothes quickly, and be off without delay."

"What for? Have I not here all that I require? I shall not disturb myself."

The king's envoy, furious with rage, boxed the lad's ears soundly. But the Dolt merely murmured, "I desire, on the word of a pike, that the broom shall give this captain a good dressing down."

Instantly the broom fell upon the unhappy man, and struck him heavy blows just as he was gaining the shelter of his carriage. He hurried to the king with the tale of his mishap and the refusal which he had met with.

The king dispatched a new ambassador to the Dolt. This one, being shrewder, made his inquiries in a way that flattered the lad. As soon as he learnt the situation he came ceremoniously before the boy, and bowing low to him, said, "Condescend to follow me to the court, for the king desires to bestow upon you a red cap, a red belt, and some red slippers."

Said the idle fellow, highly delighted, to the envoy, "I will go this moment. Get on

your way at once, for I shall arrive before you." Then he added, in a lower voice, "I desire, on the word of a pike, that the stove by which I am seated shall carry me to the king's court."

As he uttered the words the stove went cold, placed itself between the idle fellow's legs, and dashed off along the road.

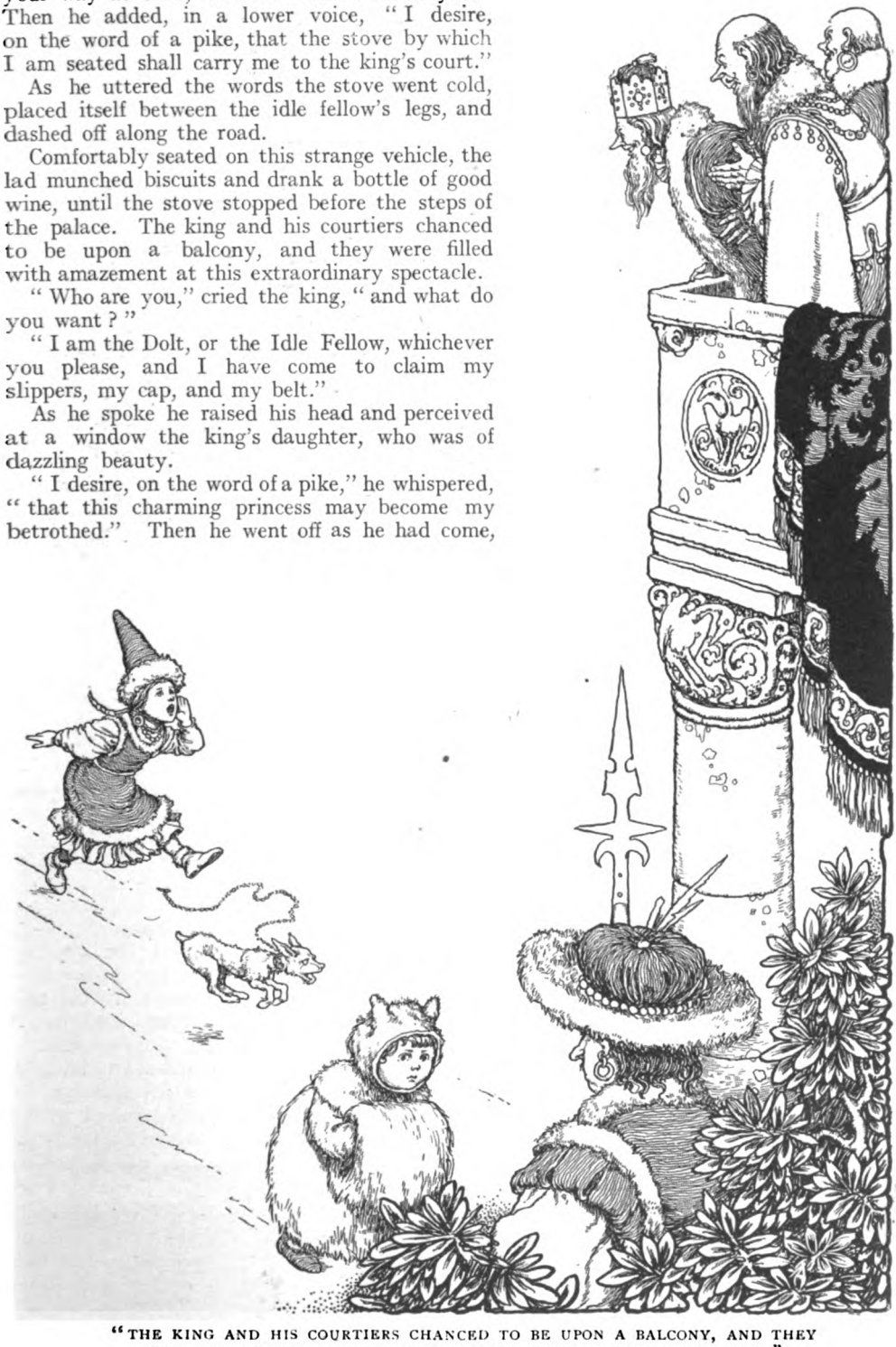
Comfortably seated on this strange vehicle, the lad munched biscuits and drank a bottle of good wine, until the stove stopped before the steps of the palace. The king and his courtiers chanced to be upon a balcony, and they were filled with amazement at this extraordinary spectacle.

"Who are you," cried the king, "and what do you want?"

"I am the Dolt, or the Idle Fellow, whichever you please, and I have come to claim my slippers, my cap, and my belt."

As he spoke he raised his head and perceived at a window the king's daughter, who was of dazzling beauty.

"I desire, on the word of a pike," he whispered, "that this charming princess may become my betrothed." Then he went off as he had come,



"THE KING AND HIS COURTIERS CHANCED TO BE UPON A BALCONY, AND THEY WERE FILLED WITH AMAZEMENT AT THIS EXTRAORDINARY SPECTACLE."

knowing that what he wished would be fulfilled, without any further trouble on his part.

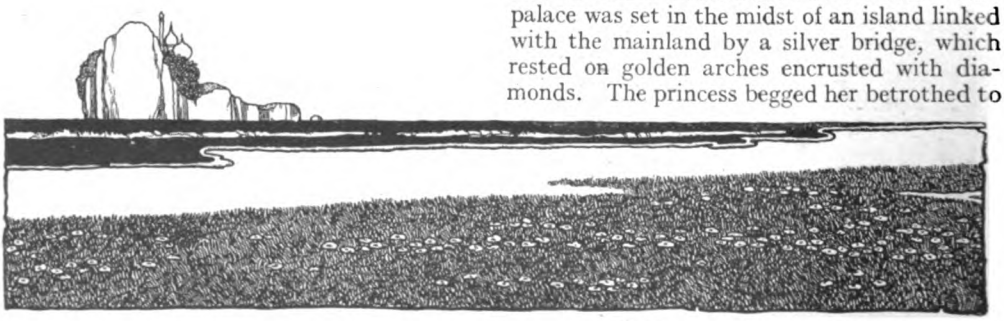
Sure enough the king's daughter suddenly evinced a great passion for this man whom she had scarcely seen. She threw herself at her father's feet, begging him to give her the Dolt for a husband. The monarch did his best to reason with her, pointing out that the object of her affection was merely a stupid and clumsy peasant. But all to no avail; day by day the young girl fell more deeply in love. The king, in despair, caused the Dolt to be arrested. He was brought to the palace and handed over to a powerful magician, who had been sought out by the king's orders.

The magician shut him up in a huge crystal tun, where he promptly went to sleep, but the king's daughter came upon the scene just at that moment, and implored her father to allow her to share the fate of the man whom she loved. Incensed by her insistence, the king gave orders that his daughter should be shut up with the Dolt, so that he might never hear another word from her. This was done, and the tun flew up into the air.

After a while the princess woke the idle fellow, and asked if he could extricate them from their plight.

"Of course I can," he answered. "That is mere child's play to me. I desire, on the word of a pike, that we find ourselves this very moment in a beautiful castle."

The tun gently landed the two aerial travellers, and all they had to do was to walk at once into a magnificent marble palace, which had windows of crystal, an amber roof, and furniture fashioned of rare woods. The palace was set in the midst of an island linked with the mainland by a silver bridge, which rested on golden arches encrusted with diamonds. The princess begged her betrothed to



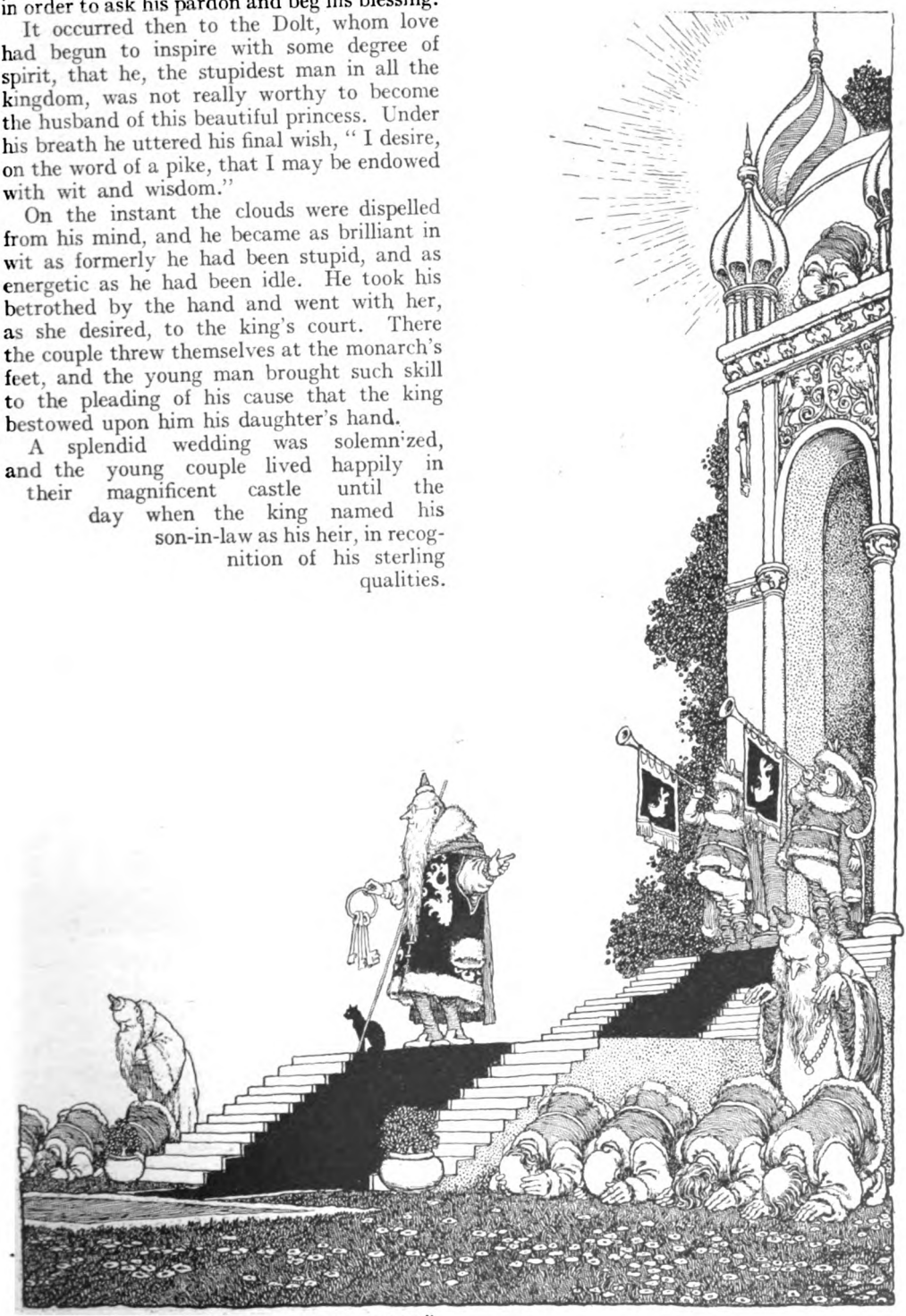
"I DESIRE THAT WE FIND OURSELVES

go with her to the court of her father the king, in order to ask his pardon and beg his blessing.

It occurred then to the Dolt, whom love had begun to inspire with some degree of spirit, that he, the stupidest man in all the kingdom, was not really worthy to become the husband of this beautiful princess. Under his breath he uttered his final wish, "I desire, on the word of a pike, that I may be endowed with wit and wisdom."

On the instant the clouds were dispelled from his mind, and he became as brilliant in wit as formerly he had been stupid, and as energetic as he had been idle. He took his betrothed by the hand and went with her, as she desired, to the king's court. There the couple threw themselves at the monarch's feet, and the young man brought such skill to the pleading of his cause that the king bestowed upon him his daughter's hand.

A splendid wedding was solemnized, and the young couple lived happily in their magnificent castle until the day when the king named his son-in-law as his heir, in recognition of his sterling qualities.



THIS VERY MOMENT IN A BEAUTIFUL CASTLE."

CURIOSITIES.

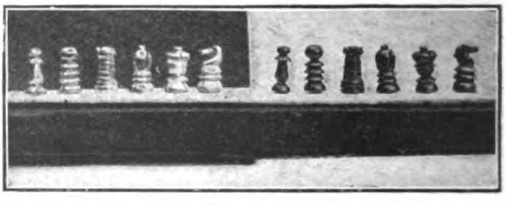
[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

A TELEPHONE FOR THE BIRDS.

OWING to fear of cats, birds could not be induced to come near the house to be fed, so this cat-proof feeding-tray was set up at some distance and kept supplied with crumbs, fat, and other dainties. A large number of birds—robins and finches in particular—partook of the hospitality, and in order to listen to them a telephone transmitter, with a weather-proof cover, was fitted to the tray and wires run up to the house, a contrivance which admirably served its purpose.—Mr. E. O. Catford, Platte Fougère Lighthouse, Guernsey.

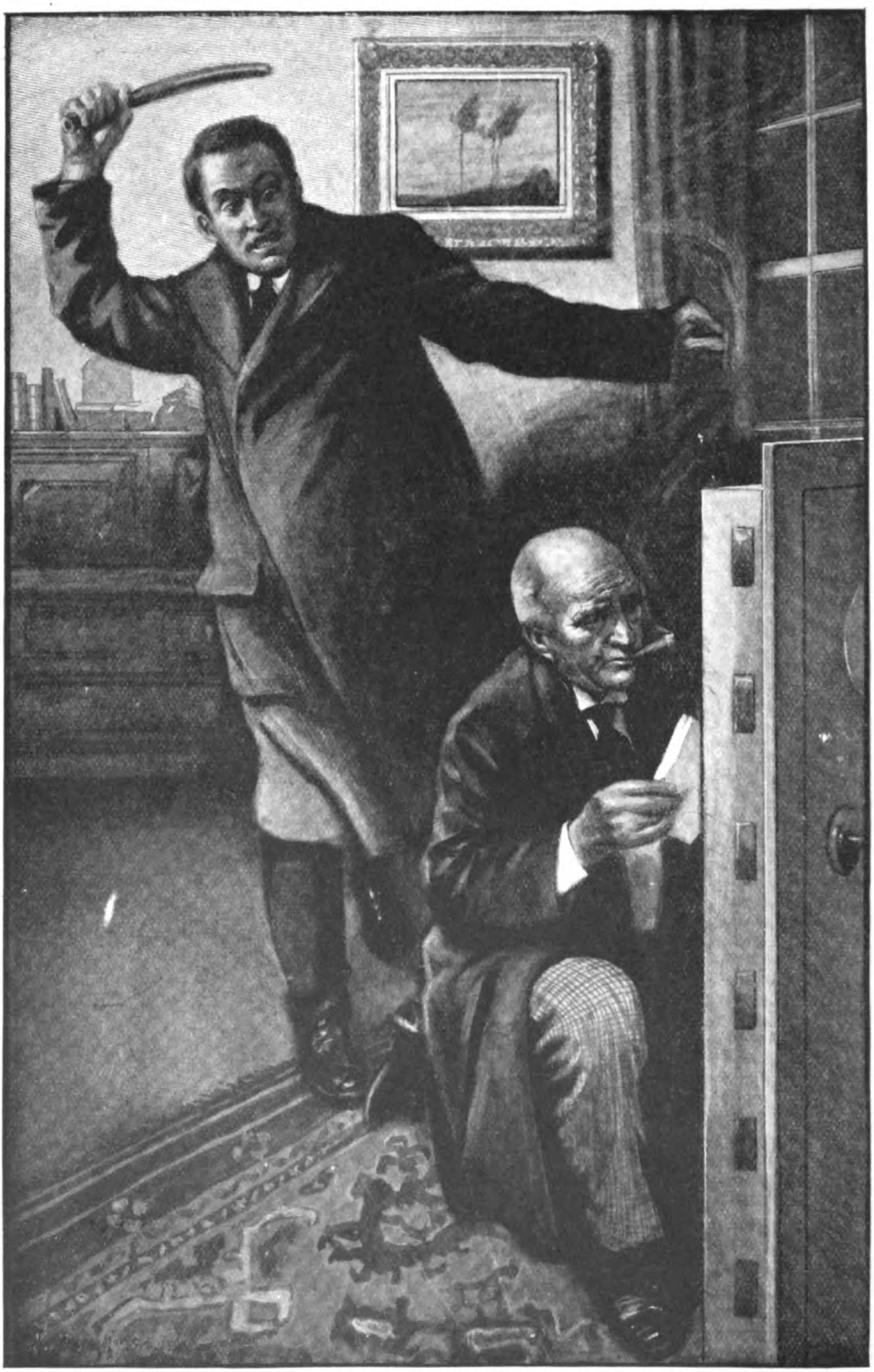
A CHESSBOARD AND MEN IN AN ORDINARY WATCH-CASE.

THIS miniature chessboard and set of chessmen, which are contained within the case of an ordinary-sized watch, I made some years ago, with the idea of using them to set up problems or register an unfinished game, and being a chess enthusiast, and a mechanic, it afforded me some pleasure to make and possess something which I think may be considered rather unique. It was made in my spare time during the evening, and was somewhat of a relaxation from mending watches. The board is made of separate squares of metal, and gave me more trouble than the pieces themselves, which, with the squares, are half of them brass and half nickel silver, the brass pieces being oxidized and the others silvered to contrast. There is an indicator in the back of the case to denote whether Black or White is to play, together with a small pair of tweezers to handle the pieces. The photographs show the actual size of the board and men.—Mr. A. J. Bourlet, 18, The Market, Palmer's Green, London, N.



CAN YOU ANSWER THIS?

A PRIVATE is, strictly speaking, supposed, when he meets an officer, to commence the salute three paces before he meets him and to remain at the salute for three paces after he has passed him. Therefore, for how many paces altogether would he remain at the salute, supposing both to be walking at the same rate?—Mr. Norman F. Proctor, 12, Rusthall Avenue, Bedford Park, W.



"HIS RIGHT HAND ROSE AND DESCENDED WITH A FLASHING STROKE."

(*See page* 124.)

NEW YORK.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. I. AUGUST, 1915. No. 296.

GALWAY INTRUDES.

By FREDERICK STUART GREENE.

Illustrated by Emile Verpilleux.

"I NEVER met you before, did I, Keenan?" The politician looked sharply at the man standing before his desk.

"No; but I come with good credentials; I'm sent up from the Street. May I see you alone?"

Keenan glanced at the servant. The weasel eyes of the political boss sank deeper beneath his fat forehead.

"Katy, I'm having business with this gentleman; you can go to bed. Now, Keenan, what can I do for you?"

"I was told to hand you this." From a pocket Keenan drew a bundle of yellow bills and laid them on the flat-topped desk. "There are my credentials—one hundred one-thousand-dollar bills. The 'Big Train' appreciates what you did in the matter of that franchise."

"It wasn't none too easy." The mask of the politician changed in no line as his eyes measured the pile of bills. "The public knows too much these days. The board gave trouble, but my boys all come across, and pulled two of the opposition, enough for the majority. These reform aldermen ain't got much political sense."

"Will you count the bills, please? And after, if you will sign this receipt, my business will be finished."

The politician looked sharply at Keenan.

"Receipt!"—his voice became hard as tool steel—"I don't sign no receipts. They'll be after sending cheques next."

"This receipt is non-committal." Keenan's mouth drew to a twisted smile. "It's wanted as a check on me; the 'Big Train's' secretary will destroy it to-morrow." He laid upon the desk a type-written paper:—

Received from Ernest Keenan
100,000 shares Gold-Frog Mining.

The politician hesitated, grunted, and finally scrawled one word across the paper. It satisfied Keenan. That name before now had made or unmade more than one man.

The politician reached for the bills. Without emotion of any kind he began dealing them off one by one; deliberately, silently, he counted the pile to its end, the watching eyes of Keenan growing the while brighter and smaller and colder. Near the clumsily-moving hands lay a writing-pad. Keenan was vaguely aware that there were words scrawled across the middle of the yellow page; otherwise his mind seemed frozen in concentration as he watched the fortune told off.

"It's O.K., Keenan; I'll put it away and let you out." The politician rose heavily, and moved towards the safe. His laboured breathing, the ticking of the desk clock, made the only sounds in the silent room.

As the boss reached the safe Keenan's lips had drawn to a white streak across his face.

The lever knob clicked sharply in the stillness; the safe door swung open. Lowering himself to one knee, the politician unlocked the metal door to an inner compartment. Keenan remained standing at the desk, every line of his figure relaxed, his eyes alert. As

the smaller door answered to the key, Keenan's body jerked tense ; one noiseless glide carried him to the safe. He towered above the kneeling politician. His right hand rose and descended with a flashing stroke ; the eighteen inches of pipe it held landed at the base of the brain, just above the upper roll of fat on the politician's neck. The force of the blow made the soft lead wrap itself about the close-cropped head. Keenan felt the skull crush in ; the pipe sank almost out of sight in the folds of flesh. The big frame of the politician stiffened ; his teeth closed with an audible click ; then all the man became limp. Keenan caught the swaying body and lowered it, without a sound, to the floor.

Then Keenan worked swiftly. Without a tremor he took from the dead hand the package of bills. Into the fingers he thrust a bit of torn cloth, with a button attached—cloth of a loud pattern such as the well-dressed Mr. Keenan never wore. Taking a firm hold on his victim's collar, he gave it a sudden wrench, tearing the shirt open. Using all his strength, he raised the heavy body from the floor, and brought its head smashing down against the steel edges of the safe door. Thus did Keenan manufacture the evidences of violence which his carefully-planned crime required.

In the small compartment of the safe there was also money. To reach this, Keenan was forced to stand astride the body. "About four thousand three hundred," he counted rapidly—"chicken-feed to me now," and laughed softly above the battered dead face lying between his feet.

Keenan went to the desk. The clock, part of an elaborate inkstand, showed twenty-two minutes past eleven. He slipped it from its casing, moved the hands to eleven-fifty-seven, gave the clock a sudden, dropping jerk, listened, and, being certain of its silence, replaced it in its frame. He laid the inkstand, with the clock face up, on the floor ten feet from the desk, spilling the ink in a trail, careful that none of it should stain his gloved hands. The few articles on the desk he dropped noiselessly to the floor. As he lifted the writing-pad he was again vaguely aware of the words written across its yellow page. The desk was laid on its side, and a chair overthrown.

Pausing at the door, Keenan looked steadily into the staring eyes of the dead mass by the safe. He turned and, leaving the light shining full upon the ghastly face, closed the door, and went swiftly down the stairs.

He passed through the inner door to the vestibule, and closed the outer doors, shutting himself in the narrow space. From the hall a dim glow filtered through the side-lights. Keenan pressed a piece of putty against one of the small panes, then with a glass-cutter he drew a circle about the putty ; he gave the glass a sharp blow, and the part within the circle came loose. Before laying the piece of glass on the floor, Keenan took from his pocket the plaster cast of a human thumb and pressed it lightly into the putty.

His work finished, Keenan turned to go. With hand on the outer door he paused. "Better make sure of the distance," he thought. Returning, he passed his hand through the hole in the glass, and assured himself that he could reach the latch on the inside. He had cut to a nicety ; the opening was just large enough to allow his hand and arm to pass through with some squeezing.

Boldly he stepped through the door, descended to the sidewalk of East Fifty-fifth Street, and turned and walked without haste towards Lexington Avenue. The street was all but deserted. A car passed up the avenue just before he reached the corner. A policeman was on fixed post at the Fifty-sixth Street crossing. Keenan walked rapidly south. At the Fifty-fourth Street corner with a quick jerk he shied the lead pipe through an opening of the storm-sewer. Two short blocks, and into the next sewer-opening went the glass-cutter and the plaster thumb.

A passing taxi landed Keenan at his bachelor quarters in West Forty-fourth Street at eleven forty-five by his watch.

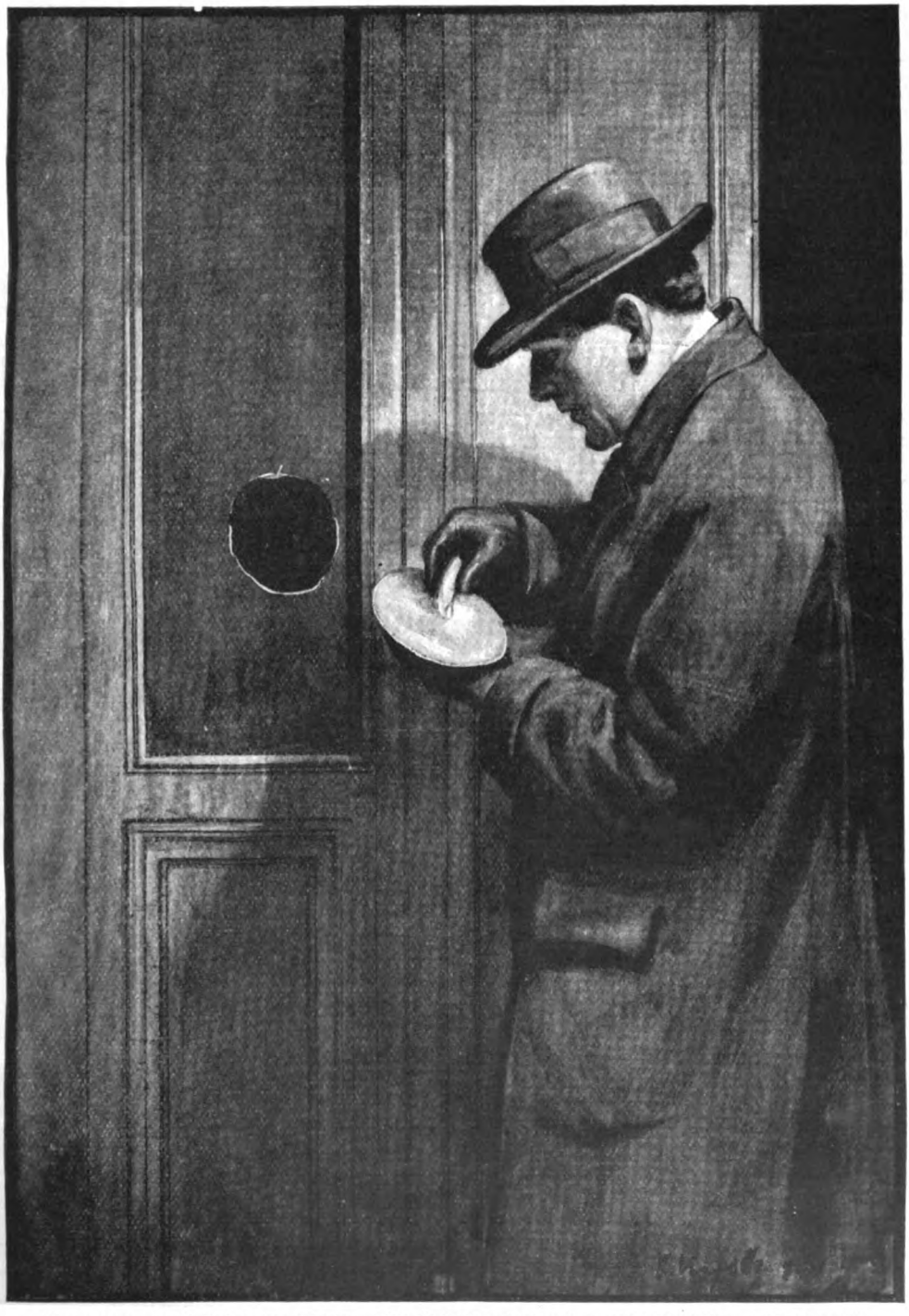
The lift was up, and the one boy on duty with it. Keenan stepped into the attendant's alcove, and, taking the cheap clock from the telephone switch-board, moved the minute hand back to eleven thirty-four. The lift descended. With a nod to the boy in charge Keenan stepped in.

"Oh, by the way, George, what time is it ? My watch has stopped."

George sped to the alcove, to return with, "Twenty-five minutes to twelve, Mr. Keenan."

"Twenty-five minutes to twelve," repeated Keenan, slowly, distinctly ; "I didn't know it was so late."

There is in New York a certain class of men who, as a rule, have one-room offices in the lower part of the town and no family apparent in any part of the world. These gentlemen, well-dressed, may be seen in the lobbies of the large hotels, at "first nights," and at other public places where those who pay are welcomed. As they stroll the



"KEENAN TOOK FROM HIS POCKET THE PLASTER CAST OF A HUMAN THUMB AND PRESSED IT LIGHTLY INTO THE PUTTY."

crowded walks of life they bow to and their bow is returned by men who count for something in the community. But seldom are they known by the women-folk belonging to these men. In its way this small group fills a useful place in affairs. In a government of and by the people there are persons who find ways of blocking the wheels of enterprise set in motion by the "men who count." To lubricate these cogged wheels specialists are employed that the "men who count" may not soil their hands by contact with the machinery.

Of these Mr. Ernest Keenan was the master oiler. Wall Street, Broadway, and Fifth Avenue had known him these fifteen years. Each year found him a trifle more bitter and much more lonely, for he was utterly without friends. This man, who had wrapped eighteen inches of lead pipe about the neck of the political boss, was neither by taste nor instinct a criminal. His one driving ambition, which during the years had grown to a passionate longing, was to gain a footing of equality with the men among whom he was thrown. The frigid imitation of friendship received from those who employed him cut into his pride with a razor edge. To cease being the go-between, to abandon for ever his shady occupation, had become all but a mania with him. Through money only, according to Ernest Keenan's way of thinking, could his end be gained. To-night the chance had come, and though over the gate to his highway was written "Murder," with cold deliberation he had set his hand to the task of opening that gate. It should not be done clumsily; there must not be the smallest sound from the hinge; not one drop from the word written in blood above that gate must smear his well-kept person. And he had succeeded.

Looking with steady eyes at himself in the glass, he thought: "I'd go through it all again. The end is worth the risk." He began to remove his coat. "Murder will out?" Keenan smiled. "Not in this case. Just one thing would have queered the game—if that fool secretary had taken the number of those bills. But he didn't; I asked him myself. But he didn't. No, this is the one time when a really big killing will go unsolved."

He reached to hang up his coat, and stopped, his arm outstretched, rigid. His face turned white, his eyes stared at his shirt-cuff. It was not closed; one button of the link was gone. Slowly his extended eyeballs contracted, slowly the colour came again to his face.

"Well, even if I dropped it in the room, even if it is clutched now in his dead hand, what's the odds? It's the wrong half." Keenan actually laughed as he took the remaining button from his sleeve. It was an oval of gold, engraved with the letters E. K. With steady fingers he took the other link, with its two buttons, from the left sleeve; on one was engraved E. K., on the other C. A.

"Poor Clara!" He looked at the links regretfully. "Safe—I must play safe."

A few minutes later Keenan was sleeping as peacefully as a kitten.

At breakfast Keenan searched the papers. They contained no account of the unpleasant incident of the night before. Half an hour later, as he left the subway at Wall Street, he listened, but with no uneasiness, for the cries of "Extra" which he knew would soon be called through all the streets of the town. But as yet only the usual city noises jangled the air.

A minute's brisk walk brought Keenan to the building which housed the business operations of the most powerful traction magnate of the Western world. He was immediately shown into the office of the great man's secretary, surrendered his receipt, and received for his services a bill of large denomination.

As he walked the short half-mile to his own office there came to Keenan a feeling almost of elation. "It is far easier than I had imagined," he thought. He took a deep breath of October air. "I haven't the faintest trace of fear. In a few moments the news will burst, but I am ready; I have discounted every possible emergency."

Five minutes later Keenan was comfortably seated at his office window overlooking City Hall Park. High above Newspaper Row the *Tribune* clock pointed to fifteen minutes after ten. As yet nothing unusual was on foot in the street below.

"It comes slowly," thought Keenan. "Either the servant overslept or the police are keeping it back from the papers."

The minute-hand of the clock crawled to twenty, then to twenty-five minutes past the hour. At last there was action. Motor-trucks hurriedly loaded with papers began to move; following the trucks came an avalanche of boys and men, all with papers under their arms; in another instant the storm had broken.

"Extra! Extra! Murder! All about the big murder!" The cries rode high on the

crisp autumn air, to fill the whole world with the ugly word.

Keenan rose leisurely, stepped into the hallway, and rang for the lift.

" Charlie, get me one of those extras," he said, in his usual voice. " I suppose it's another one of their fakes."

The first accounts were meagre ; the headlines, giving the name of the politician, followed by the one word " Murdered," told all the actual news that the papers had. This was followed by a few paragraphs describing how the body had been found that morning between eight and nine o'clock by the maid, who had heard no unusual sounds in the house during the night. One paper hazarded the statement that some disgruntled henchman of the boss had killed him. Another suggested robbery as the motive. The early editions had neither material nor time for more than the first bare fact of the crime.

Keenan took down the receiver of his telephone. Among his acquaintances was an assistant district attorney.

" Halloa, Harrison. This is Ernest Keenan. Have you heard of the murder ? The extra is just out. Well, if I'm not mistaken, I can give something to the police ; but I don't know anyone in the department. Can you go around there with me ? All right ; I'll come over."

A few minutes later, accompanied by the assistant district attorney, Keenan passed through the grim doors of police headquarters without the tightening of a single nerve. They were shown into the office of the commissioner himself.

Keenan acknowledged introductions to the commissioner, his secretary, the chief of police, and the chief of the detective bureau.

The commissioner opened in a friendly manner the proceedings which Keenan had staged for himself.

" Mr. Harrison 'phoned us that you think you have some information regarding the murder of last night that may be of use to us. What have you to tell, Mr. Keenan ? "

Though Keenan was not instinctively a criminal, he possessed the most efficient tool with which the kit of a professional swindler can be furnished—a pair of clear brown eyes that he could direct straight into the eyes of any man or woman on earth.

" I was with the boss at a late hour last night. In fact, except for the murderer, I must have been the last person to see him alive. At the beginning of our interview he sent the servant to bed, and when our business was finished, he let me out himself."

" What time was this ? " asked the detective.

" Let's see," replied Keenan, looking straight at his questioner. " My appointment was for eleven o'clock, and, if anything, I got to the house a minute or two before eleven. Our interview lasted not more than fifteen or twenty minutes." He turned with a frank smile to the commissioner. " You may know, sir, that the boss was not given to long conversations."

" Can you fix the time of your leaving any more definitely than that ? " asked the detective.

Again Keenan looked full at him. " No, I don't believe I can. Yes, we might work back to it, for I remember now that I reached my rooms in West Forty-fourth Street at twenty-five minutes to twelve."

Further questions brought out in detail the lift-boy incident, to Keenan's entire satisfaction.

" His name ? "

George was the only name Keenan had for him.

An attendant left the room, to return after a brief space.

After leaving the house, Keenan continued, he had walked for two, not more than three blocks when he had caught a passing taxi, and was landed at his door, as stated, at about eleven thirty-five.

A hasty calculation of time and distance travelled showed that his arrival checked with the time of his leaving the boss's house, which was fixed at eleven-twenty.

" Mr. Keenan "—the detective spoke with more haste—" why did you go to see the murdered man at eleven o'clock at night ? "

" That," said Keenan, with just the right hesitation, " is rather a business secret ; but I think the circumstances are so grave that I am justified in telling you." He turned a frank gaze full on the commissioner. " I went to pay the boss a large sum of money."

" In cash ? " asked the detective.

" Yes, in bills."

The telephone sounded.

" For you, Mr. Commissioner," said the secretary.

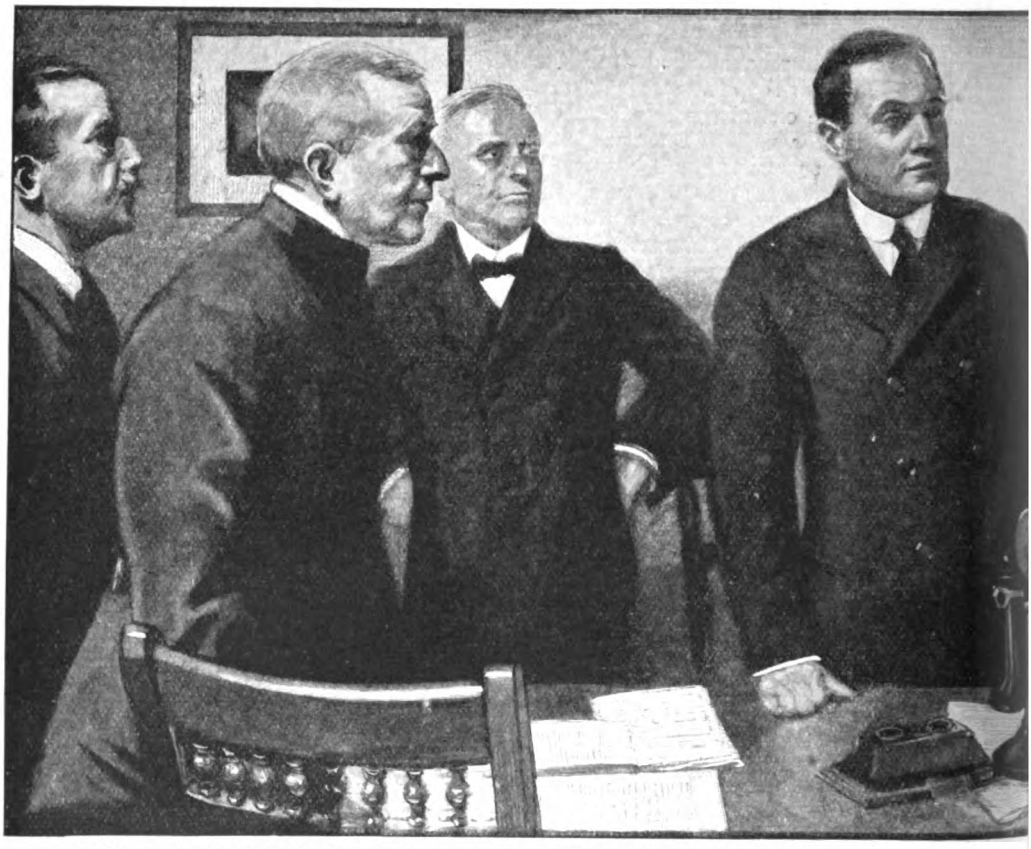
" I'm busy and can't be disturbed."

" But, Mr. Commissioner, this is a call from the office of the ' Big Train.' "

The commissioner took the telephone.

" This is the commissioner. Yes, there is a Mr. Keenan here ; but please be brief. We are in the midst of an important conference."

" Yes, I am Mr. Keenan. Yes, I have told them. No, not what it was for. I



"I HEAR THAT KEENAN HAS TOLD YOU THAT HE WAS SENT BY MY OFFICE TO THE BOSS LAST COME OUT. THIS MONEY HAD

suppose so; that is, if a representative of your office will come up here. Otherwise I feel it my duty to tell everything I know. What, the old man himself?" There was surprise in Keenan's voice. "Well, that will undoubtedly be best. I'll tell the commissioner. Good-bye."

"Mr. Commissioner," said Keenan, "I'd rather you wouldn't ask me further about the money just now. The 'Big Train' is coming here to see you himself." There was a perceptible stir in the room.

"Mr. Keenan," resumed the detective, "to get back to the subject, it was twenty-five minutes past twelve when you reached home?"

"No," replied Keenan, innocently; "it was twenty-five minutes *before* twelve when I was inside the lift."

"Oh, yes; my mistake. Now, please tell us in detail just what happened after you reached the house—the boss's house, I mean."

"I was let in by a maid, who took me up to the boss's room. I told him that I had been sent up on confidential business. He sent the girl to bed."

"What time was that?"

"About eleven; possibly two or three minutes after."

"Was there a clock in the room?"

"If there was, I didn't notice it."

"Did you go behind the boss's desk—to the side on which he was sitting?"

"No; all the time I was in the room, which wasn't long, I was in front of the desk."

"Yes; go ahead."

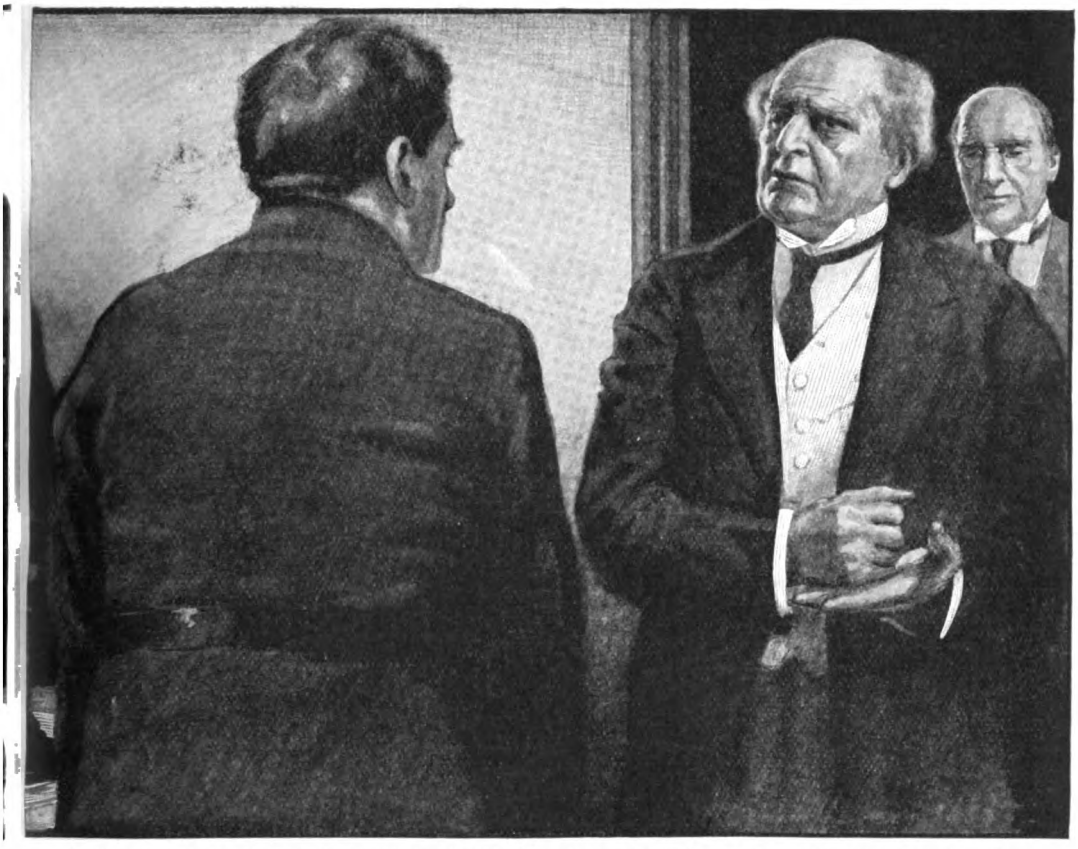
"Well, I said I had some money for him, and asked him to count it, which he did, and it took him several minutes. We talked for some time longer, and then he came downstairs with me, and let me out the front door."

"Did he close the doors of the vestibule?"

"No, I don't believe he did. No; I remember now that he closed the inner door behind me before I had quite left the vestibule."

"Sure of that, because it's important?"

"Yes; positive."



NIGHT WITH A CONSIDERABLE SUM OF MONEY. WELL, THAT'S TRUE. BUT THAT MUST NOT NOTHING TO DO WITH THE MURDER."

"Now, Mr. Keenan, was there a safe in the room?"

"Yes, I noticed one."

"Was the safe door open during your conversation?"

"No; closed."

"Did the boss put the money in the safe before he went downstairs with you?"

"No; he left it on his desk."

"Did you notice anyone in the street when you left the house?"

"No; there was no one on the block. But now, when I come to think over every detail, I do remember hearing footsteps behind me when I turned towards Lexington Avenue. But I did not look back."

During these questions Keenan maintained an admirable demeanour. Entirely at his ease, his bearing was that of one wholly anxious to give what aid he could. His eyes were turned innocently now on one official, now straight at another. The man gloried in his acting and took a keen enjoyment in the game. The big trump he wished to play was finally dealt to him; he received it as a past-master of poker might take from the table a fourth ace to add to the three already held. The chief of detectives dealt him this card with some hesitation.

"Mr. Keenan, there is a little formality we should like to go through—would you mind—understand, it will not be kept as a permanent record—but would you mind letting us have your finger-print?"

Keenan raised his eyebrows to just the right angle of surprise. A shade of hurt reluctance passed across his face.

"We can take them here," the detective added; "you will not be at all inconvenienced."

Then, with a smile of perfect good nature, Keenan answered:—

"Certainly, gentlemen; I have no objections."

As the imprints were being taken, a mild commotion was heard in the hallway; quick steps were approaching, then a loud voice.

"You needn't announce me. The com-

missioner knows who I am, and that I am coming by appointment," it said.

The door opened, and through it, followed by his secretary, strode the "Big Train," the traction king. Everyone in the room rose at his coming.

"How do you do, Commissioner," he thundered, his eyebrows snapping together above his cold blue eyes. He nodded to the two officers, and shot Keenan through with one glance.

"A most horrible affair!" he continued. "I hear that Keenan has told you that he was sent by my office to the boss last night with a considerable sum of money. Well, that's true. But that must not come out. This money had nothing to do with the murder. Nothing, do you hear? It was money owed for services rendered—an entirely regular business proposition. No word of this must reach the papers." He glanced about the room, fixing for an instant everyone present.

"But, sir; suppose someone knew of this large sum, and, let us say, followed Mr. Keenan to the house, gained admittance shortly after he left, killed, and robbed the boss? In fact, sir, that at present is our theory."

"Fiddlesticks!" roared the big man. "Except Keenan, my secretary, and myself, no one knew. Keenan I have known for years; my secretary spent the night at my house. It was common talk that the boss kept large sums about him; any ward politician will tell you that on the day before elections—'dough day,' I believe they call it—he would have as much cash in his house as a national bank usually carries. This thing was done by a professional cracksman. I wonder it was not done sooner." The man stormed on, using the method which had won for him the name "Big Train." He ran over everything and everybody that stood in his way. Whole boards of directors had before now been ground to submission beneath the ruthless wheels of his desire.

"Now, Mr. Commissioner, here's the point," he continued. "If news of this payment gets out, it will cause no end of useless trouble, particularly at this time, when every politician at Washington is engaged in one investigation after another. If it would lead to the detection of the murderer I would be the first to come forward with the information; but it can't help in the smallest degree, so I trust you will respect my confidence, and see that no word of this money gets beyond the door of this room."

There was no possible opposition to bring against the man; his force rolled from him like a tidal wave, submerging completely every other personality in the room.

His glance swept the room again, and every head bowed in assent.

"Very well," he said, in a voice of finality, "we will consider that part of the affair closed. Good day, gentlemen." He wheeled, and stalked from the room, to the visible relief of everyone. At the door the detective checked the secretary.

"Did you take the numbers of those bills?"

"No," whispered the secretary, and sped out in the wake of the great man.

This visit was an unexpected bolt of safety to the closed gate of Keenan's highway. The power of money, the power of this man, none knew better than he. It was certain now that the department would keep from the papers all mention of the transaction, and the name of the agent as well.

"Gentlemen," said Keenan, when the atmosphere had cleared, "is there any more I can do for you?"

"No; but wait a moment longer," answered the detective. "You will be glad to know that we are checking every detail of your story so that we shall not have to trouble you again." The attendant left the room to return with a memorandum. The detective read:—

"Finger-prints O.K. No resemblance."

Keenan's hours of delicate labour with plaster and engraver's tool had come to a useful result.

"Jim is back, sir," said the attendant to his chief.

"Tell him to come in. Well, Jim, see your party?"

"Yes, sir. Shall I speak before him?" Jim nodded towards Keenan. "Well, sir, the boy says he remembers Mr. Keenan coming in last night, and asking what time it was, and he went to the clock and saw that it was twenty-five minutes to twelve."

"Mr. Keenan"—it was the detective who spoke—"we are glad to say that every part of your story is confirmed; there is not the slightest trace of suspicion connected with your actions last night. We have pretty well fixed the time of the murder, and know that the job was done after you got back home."

Late in the afternoon Keenan returned to his apartments; he dressed always for dinner. As he opened a drawer he stopped short. Only a precise man would have noticed anything amiss. He smiled grimly at what he saw, and began a deliberate round of the

rooms ; one after another every drawer and closet was opened. Keenan's smile broadened. He telephoned for the manager.

" Mr. Nielsen, was anyone in my rooms to-day ? "

" Why, no, Mr. Keenan ; certainly not."

" Mr. Nielsen, how many men searched this room to-day ? "

" Why, sir, what——"

" How many men, Nielsen, searched this room to-day ? " Keenan's words fell like icicles on frozen ground.

Nielsen withered.

" Two, sir. But they showed their badges, and——"

" What time was this ? "

" About noon, sir."

" The same two who questioned George ? "

" Yes, sir. I hope, Mr. Keenan——"

" You did exactly right, Mr. Nielsen. Thank you. That's all."

The manager's information pleased Keenan. Going to the bath-room he dropped to his knees, reached into a far corner, and with a knife-blade pried one of the tiles from the wall. In the partition block behind the tile a hole had been broken. In the hollow lay the pile of yellow bills, and on them rested the cuff-links.

Into Keenan's make-up Nature had built one of those unaccountable contrasts so often planned for our amazement. Within this man, whose every aim was towards self-gratification, whose view of right ended at the horizon of personal advancement, whose heart was made from a combination of steel filings and flint chips, lay hidden one slender vein of softness. In years gone by there had been a woman, the only being in all the world who had ever loved him ; the memory of her was the one thing for which Keenan held reverence. It was of her he was thinking as he looked at the whole and broken link, all that now remained of her last gift to him.

" Clara," he said, " not the slightest trace of suspicion." For a few moments he stood silent. Then he spoke again, almost softly. " No," he said, " I don't think I can throw these away."

From below in the street there floated to him the faint cry : " Extra ! Extra ! All about the big murder ! "

Keenan smiled a confident, satisfied smile and went out in search of light and life and a good dinner.

It was Christmas Eve, and Keenan was at Monte Carlo. The gaiety, the luxury, the ease with which acquaintances are made endeared the gambling principality to a person of his attainments. Here, for six weeks, he had lived in full measure, and this added to his satisfaction—here he was able, with safety, to round out the business begun early in October in East Fifty-fifth Street. For to anyone except the owner of a faro bank or a bookmaker, one hundred thousand dollars in large bills, acquired through the aid of a lead pipe, might easily turn out an awkward blessing. The careful Keenan had been specially cautious in placing his fortune. In a few savings-banks where cash only is taken he had made deposits. He dared not repeat this too often. But at Monte Carlo his task of changing currency into cheques was both easy and pleasant.

As the weeks passed he sent draft after draft back to New York. With the third one he enclosed a note to the cashier, one of his numerous acquaintances, telling of his luck at the tables. Nor was this wholly fiction, for Fortune recognized Keenan as one of the bold, and smiled broadly upon him.

An inventory of results this Christmas Eve showed him to be rid of the last of those embarrassing bills, and also that he had won, in making the exchange, twenty thousand francs additional. He had shaken off the taint of the go-between, had met men worth while, and these men had presented the well-mannered Mr. Keenan to their women-folk.

" I'll send myself a little gift," he smiled ; " but first for comfort." He got into a smoking-jacket and slippers, lighted a cigar, and drew up to the writing-desk. Before him lay the last of those homeward-bound drafts. He started writing with the conventional :—

Dear Sir,—Enclosed please find draft.

He paused, and fell to dreaming. The comfort of his surroundings, the aroma of his Havana, the music of a distant orchestra, combined to make this man feel complete physical and mental content. Not one cloud now shadowed his path ; so Keenan sat and dreamed. The orchestra ceased. Keenan came to himself with a pleasant consciousness of his satisfactory state of being. He turned again to the letter ; a look of mild surprise came into his eyes. Taking up the paper, he stared at it in wonder ; the look of surprise deepened, and his brows drew together in a frown of inquiry. Then he laughed.

" Well, I'll be hanged ! " he said, still looking at the letter. Beneath the formal beginning, written again and again in a straight, precise column, was the name James A. Galway. As Keenan looked, laugh though he might, that name seemed to face him with a menace.

"Who the devil is James A. Galway?" He held the paper a moment longer; his smile had altogether gone.

"I can't remember that I ever knew such a person, nor ever heard the name."

Keenan tore the paper to small pieces, relighted his cigar, wrote a second letter to its conclusion, and giving up his plan for a quiet evening in his room, got again into his coat, and sought the lights and companionship of the crowded *foyer*.

A few days after the strange writing Keenan moved on to Paris, where life again greeted him with extended hands. Some of the people met at Monte Carlo had drifted into the French capital. He sought among these the ones he considered worth a delicate cultivation. Keenan made progress. At last came real triumph. On a memorable night he had been host when a titled Englishman with his wife, their daughter, the Honourable Miss So-and-So, and the first secretary of the American Legation had been guests. The dinner was ordered with a skill to satisfy the most fastidious; the wines were of a vintage hard to find even in Paris. The evening had come to a triumphant end with a supper at his own apartment in the best and newest hotel of the city. The guests had left at a late hour, and at leaving had paid the crowning tribute to Keenan's ambition: he had been asked to visit early in March the country home of the English nobleman.

The last guest gone, Keenan threw himself into an easy-chair to think over the events of the successful evening. Life's tide was at the flood. He mused pleasantly, at peace with all the world and himself. The clock striking two ended his reverie.

He became aware that his hand was not empty. He looked; his smile became a distorted opening of the lips: his fingers held a pen. Upon the desk at his elbow lay a sheet of paper. On this, written not once, but from top to bottom of the page, was the name James A. Galway.

Slowly the open mouth of the man drew to a hard, straight line.

"What—what—is this? That confounded name again!" He drew his handkerchief across his forehead; it came away damp. He rose and walked rapidly, crossing and recrossing the room. Finally he strode to the desk, snatched up the paper, and, without looking at the writing, tore it to bits.

The early days of March found a change in Keenan. His gaze now held a look not so much of uneasiness as of unrest, perhaps. He seemed ever to expect something—something not altogether pleasant. Several times during abstracted moments since the night of the party he had come to full reality to find that his subconscious mind had forced his hand to its strange task of writing and rewriting the name of James A. Galway. Each repetition had left its mark even more indelibly upon his mind than upon the paper. He had sought systematically a reason for the vagary. The writing was in itself strange enough, but why the feeling of dread? A hundred times he assured himself that he had neither remorse nor fear for the occurrence in East Fifty-fifth Street. With great pains he searched out the names of even the most obscure New York politician; none even sounded like James A. Galway. After days of work and thought he convinced himself that the mysterious name belonged neither to friend nor foe of the boss. Logically, therefore, he decided that who or whatever James A. Galway might be, the name was in no way connected with that affair. Farther he could not go; every path of reason ended at a barricade through which no opening could be forced. He tried to clear his mind of the haunting question, but ever it called to him:—

"Who is James A. Galway? How does this man touch your life? Why does the writing of this accursed name fill you with shaking dread until now you start at the mere sight of white paper?"

The time came for Keenan's desired visit to his English friends. He reached their place after the tea-hour had passed. There was only time for a hasty greeting from his host before dressing for dinner. Keenan found, on descending, that the drawing-room was yet empty of guests. He turned into the library and lighted a cigarette. Afterwards, he remembered having sat for a moment near a great oak table. The cheery voice of his host called him from the room. Later that night, with several of the men, he returned to the library for a final smoke. Keenan was sitting in a far corner, deep in conversation with an Army man, when he heard his host call out:—

"Who is this devil of an Irishman who is so proud of his name that he has written it all over the place? Do any of you know James A. Galway?"

"I say, man"—it was the officer speaking to Keenan—"aren't you feeling well? Here, have a sip of brandy."

That night Keenan walked in his room until the day had come. . . .

"WHAT—WHAT—IS THIS? THAT CONFOUNDED NAME AGAIN!"

It was the last day of September. Keenan had booked passage for the States, and was to sail the next morning. By this time he judged it safe to place at better interest the money left in the banks at home. This added source of revenue would permit Mr. Keenan to return for an indefinite stay in Europe.

Once more he was almost at peace with himself; his stay in England had fulfilled his best wishes. He now counted several good families as among his growing list of friends; besides—and this was the vital point—he had shaken off James A. Galway. For six months he had been spared a reminder from the unknown.

On this last night in London Keenan went early to his rooms. By half-past ten he was ready for bed, or almost ready; he had not as yet attended to the writing-desk. There was now no real need, of course; that unbidden writing was a dead incident at which he could laugh. Indeed, he did laugh, if in a somewhat strained manner, as he swept the sheets of white paper into a drawer and closed it.

By seven the next morning he was awake, and went to his bath humming. "I never felt more fit in my life," he thought, as he stepped back into the room. Then Mr. Keenan stopped still; all his blood standing stagnant about his heart, his eyes stared towards the writing-table. On it lay a single sheet of paper. With an oath Keenan sprang to it, tore the paper to fragments, threw them to the floor, and in frenzy stamped upon them.

A sight of his distorted face, caught in the glass, steadied him for a moment.

He staggered to the bed and threw himself face down upon it. For long minutes the knobs of the bed-head rattled against the wall. After a time he got his nerve in hand. He forced his brain back to calmness. In the end he rose and dressed in frantic haste. His leaving had become a flight from the torn bits of paper scattered on the floor.

For six weeks Keenan had been in New York—six weeks of unrest and misery. The unbidden writing of the dreaded name had increased in frequency with the passing days. Again and again he had caught himself at

the uncanny practice. At each new writing Keenan felt his nerve slipping from him, like fragments from a wave-washed shore. He knew the breaking-point was near at hand; each fresh occurrence left him weak and terrified. Terrified at what? His methodical reason crumbled before the unanswerable question. He felt now only a necessity for flight, but flight from what? Flight to where? In Monaco, in France, in England, on the sea, and most of all here in his own land, this thing had been done. Were the stretches of the earth great enough to hold a place where this unknown thing could not follow? At any odds, he could try. He could no longer stand and wait until madness should catch up. He had arranged to begin his flight on the morrow.

Above all, he now shunned solitude, knowing that should his mind wander for an instant his hand would be driven to its wretched work.

His one relief during these miserable weeks had been a friend; one, though new in the making, still a real friend. This man, Robert McDonald, had, from the first, seemed to like him, and Keenan, thirsting for human sympathy, had given him every chance to show it. This the new friend had done in that awkward, masculine way where little said stands for much understood.

Keenan counted greatly upon the comfort of this companionship for his last night at home. He was awaiting now, in the old rooms in West Forty-fourth Street, a message from McDonald. At last the telephone sounded.

"Is that you, Bob?" asked Keenan, anxiously. "What's that? You can't meet me until after dinner? Why?" Then, after a pause: "Oh, nonsense! Come right on up here; I'm not going to dress." Another anxious pause. "Clean collar? That makes no difference, I can lend you a dozen; mine will fit." A longer pause, and then Keenan, with relieved voice, "That's all right, old man; come right up." He sank back with a deep-drawn breath. For twenty minutes he had been expecting that call, an age of time for Keenan to wait in these days.

McDonald received a hearty welcome on his first visit to Keenan's rooms.

"Come right in, old man. I didn't know that you were fussy about dress."

"You can't call this fussy," said the visitor, pointing to his mud-bespattered collar. "Compliments of a passing motor."

"It is pretty far gone," Keenan replied. "Make yourself at home, Bob. Take off your coat and have a wash."

"Now for that collar you promised me," said McDonald, coming from the bathroom later.

"In the top drawer over there; help yourself."

Keenan's friend selected a collar from a leather travelling-case.

"I see you are about packed and ready for your trip," he said, squaring himself before the glass.

"Yes, I sail at ten to-morrow," answered Keenan, from his chair across the room. "We'll have a farewell blow-out to-night. I've got tickets——"

"Bother!" interrupted McDonald.

"What's wrong?"

"I've broken my collar button," said Keenan's friend.

"Just look in that box on the right-hand side; you'll find two or three there."

McDonald raised the lid of a small jewel-box and, with swift fingers, fished among an odd lot of buttons.

"Here's just the thing, a bone one; so I won't be robbing you of much."

"Go as far as you like," cheerfully answered Keenan.

"I say, Keenan" — from McDonald's position Keenan's face was clearly reflected in the glass—"you were on this side when the big boss got his last year, weren't you?"

"Well, I should say I was!" replied Keenan, naturally. The reference in no wise disturbed him. Many times he had gone through similar ordeals in the first weeks after the crime, and practice had perfected his replies.

McDonald leisurely adjusted the new button.

"Well, it always struck me as odd that anyone could make a clean get-away with a big job like that."

"They never found a clue, I believe," replied Keenan, lighting a cigar with steady hand.

"So they say," continued his friend. "I am told that detectives swarmed all over the old man's house for a week."

"But found nothing," said Keenan, to fill in the pause.

"Almost nothing," said the friend.

Keenan stopped smoking.

"On the third day of the search a new man got in on the job. After this fellow had ransacked the place, and about given up, he noticed an umbrella-stand in the hall. He was going to look through this when the man in charge stopped him, saying the thing had been turned upside down a dozen times. So this new man hauled off for a bit."

Keenan's cigar had gone out.

"But that stand was just below a hole

in one of the side-lights that the murderer was supposed to have cut. As soon as his superior got out of sight, this chap went back to those umbrellas. One of them had a broken rib which sagged out." McDonald slowly adjusted the borrowed collar. Keenan was now quivering with attention. "Well, this detective took out first one umbrella and then another; the bottom of the stand was as bare as an empty soup-plate; so he put them back again, and moved off."

Keenan's tense expression relaxed.

"But something," continued his friend, "kept pulling that man back to those umbrellas. At last he took up the broken one"—Keenan became rigid once more—"and opened it."

McDonald paused. Keenan tried to speak once, twice, then, "Yes," he gasped, in a voice as dry as dust.

"Well," said McDonald, slowly, "half a sleeve-link fell out of that old umbrella."

Keenan felt the vitals within him draw to a cold knot, then fear flowed through all his veins; for the first time this man knew the sickening intensity of its icy grip. His heart seemed to die within his breast, to come alive again behind his temples, where it pounded as if seeking to break through and escape.

"This new man put that cuff-button in his pocket and kept quiet. He knew that button belonged to the man who had cut the hole in the glass, and the man who cut that hole killed the boss." In the mirror Keenan's face showed as white as plaster.

"There was one thing queer about the case that I—that this new man could not make out. Headquarters worked on the job, but they muffled it. After a while word got around that though there would be no money reward offered, the man who could land the murderer might look for some pretty quick promotion. So this new man went to the chief one afternoon, and asked if he could go special on the case. He got assigned all right, but he couldn't make any headway. Finally, he went to the chief again. It was rumoured that something had happened in the commissioner's office the day after the murder, but the chief would not say anything about that. The detective had to give it up, and for six months there was nothing doing."

Keenan made a desperate effort to get hold of himself. He strained painfully to piece together the fragments of his former nerve, shattered now by a written name.

"But one evening an idea came to him," McDonald's voice went smoothly on; "simple enough, too. 'The hole in the glass,' he reasoned, 'might have been cut just as easily after the murder as before.' Do you get me —*inside* job? This new slant on the case hit him so hard that he chased right around to the chief's house. He found the old man in an after-dinner mood, and he tackled him hard. The chief loosened up a bit, and admitted that a man had been questioned, but had told a straight story, and, besides, he insisted that all the evidence pointed to an outside job. But in the end the detective got what he was after: the chief told him the man's name."

Keenan fell back in his chair, a mass of limp fear.

"Then the new man got busy in earnest. They let him look over the record and examine the finger-prints."

"They lied!" whispered Keenan. "They said the record would not be kept."

"The two prints," continued Keenan's friend, ignoring the interruption, "were about as different as two thumbs could have made. But at last the strongest glass of the department showed him something interesting in the faint impression on the putty. You know, finger-lines never touch. Well, just at one point, and only for about the thousandth part of an inch, two of these lines came together. I tell you, the man who did that carving had a keen eye and a steady hand."

All this time McDonald had stood with his back to Keenan, studying in the glass the stricken face of his victim. Abruptly he turned and said, grimly: "Well, Keenan, do you want to hear any more? Or are you ready to go with me now?" There was the glimmer of gold in his outstretched palm. "Your broken set is at last complete."

"Who in thunder *are* you?" gasped Keenan.

"Robert McDonald, of the Police Department," coldly answered his friend.

"You lie, you sneaking rat!" screamed Keenan. "You are James A. Galway!"

"What do you know about James A. Galway?" McDonald shot out the question.

"I know that he is a hound who has been slinking in my shadow. I know that he is a cur who has had food and drink and friendship from me so that in the end he might cheat me out of my life under the name of Robert McDonald."

"Wrong, Keenan; but it is queer you should hit on the only part of the job I couldn't clean up." McDonald's words reached through a mist of fear and rage to Keenan's brain. "It was only a name written on a yellow pad, found in the boss's room. None of us could ever figure out just who James A. Galway was."

CABINET MINISTERS:

Their Human Side.

II.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL has a remarkable record. Before he was thirty he had gone through five military campaigns and had written one of the best biographies in the English language, for which, by the way, although only a comparatively short book, he is said to have received no less than eight thousand pounds. By the time he was thirty-two he had become a Cabinet Minister, and has held office ever since, during three years of which period he was First Lord of the Admiralty.

Such a man is necessarily an interesting and vivid personality, and the public may be interested to learn some details of the way in which he lives and does his work. First of all, let me say that the public do not know Mr. Churchill. They believe him to be a fragile, delicate man who works on his nerves and enthusiasm. There was never a greater mistake. He is a strongly-built, muscular person who takes a very healthy interest in his meals. With Winston dinner is a sacred institution. He never misses his grub. Very few men could perform the amount of work which he does, and fewer still could bear the constant strain and anxiety to which he has been subjected for many months past. The popular impression regarding Mr. Churchill's health is due in a great measure to his pallor. He has a very white, fair skin, which makes him look delicate. This is accentuated by his almost constant habit of bending his head forward, which gives him the appearance of a slight stoop. Mr. Churchill starts work early in the morning. If you are privileged to interview him in his bedroom, say at eight o'clock, you will find him sitting up in bed busily writing page after page of memoranda or despatches, or dictating to his shorthand writer. Mr. Churchill writes a beautiful hand, and makes comparatively few alterations in what he writes. He has the literary mind and literary habit. He thinks over his sentences before he writes them, and, as a rule, when written they require very little change. He usually rises about nine o'clock, and in the course of dressing frequently does more writing or dictating. After he has dressed, if his engagements will permit, he takes a short ride in the Park, either alone or with Mrs. Churchill. He does not readily make friends, and occasionally gives offence to comparative strangers by the preoccupied and rather gloomy manner which he at times presents. When thinking over some problem, he will often be quite oblivious of all around him, and will fail to see or greet friends or acquaintances whom he may meet. On the other hand, he is a close and constant friend to those he likes. A delightful companion, always full of interesting subjects for conversation, he has a fund of good stories and is always ready with some apposite allusion. He is well read, and, like Mr. Lloyd George, has the art

WINSTON CHURCHILL AT ABOUT THE AGE OF TWELVE.

Photo. Bassano.

AN INTERESTING EARLY PORTRAIT.
Photo. Ellis & Walery.

of picking the good things out of a book and remembering them. Mr. Churchill has a wonderful memory for verses. Three of his favourite poets are Burns, Kipling, and Lindsay Gordon. Long before the war he was fond of quoting Burns's well-known verse :—

For gold the merchant ploughs the main,
The farmer ploughs the manor ;
But glory is the sodger's prize,
The sodger's wealth is honour.
The brave poor sodger ne'er despise,
Nor count him as a stranger ;
Remember he's his country's stay
In day and hour of danger.

Mr. Churchill has played many *rôles*, but undoubtedly at heart he is a soldier. He places courage above all other virtues. He usually looks at matters from a soldier's point of view, and delights in military history. He loves to study the detail of great campaigns, and always looks forward to writing the life of his ancestor, the great Duke of Marlborough. Like Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Churchill is a great philosopher. He has thought out the problems of life, and is prepared with wise apothegms for all occasions.

I have said that the public do not understand Mr. Churchill, and I have instanced the case of his health. They also fail to understand his methods. They do not appreciate that he is a most industrious, thorough, and hard-working Minister. He gets up every detail of a subject, and is always prepared to enforce his case by carefully-prepared arguments and facts.

Mr. Churchill has the defects of his qualities. Like most brilliant men, he sometimes acts too much on the impulse of the moment. Many men are deterred from action by doubt of their own capacity, but Mr. Churchill's achievements have very naturally given him confidence in his ability to carry through most enterprises. He is also, perhaps, too logical. His clear and well-ordered brain does not always

MR. AND MRS. WINSTON CHURCHILL AT MILITARY MANŒUVRES, IN WHICH THEY BOTH TOOK THE GREATEST INTEREST.
Photo. Central News.

appreciate that most human affairs are not governed by logic and that people do not act in ordered sequence. Mr. Churchill also has a wonderful memory, both for large and small things. He has a delightful way of remembering his friends on suitable anniversaries—a wonderful tribute of friendship from a busy man. Few things please him better than to do one of his friends a good turn.

Mr. Churchill has many relaxations; one of his chief delights is the preparation and delivery of a fine peroration. He loves perorations, and when he is in good form his conversation often consists of a whole series, which he declaims one after the other with great point and emphasis. He is much younger than he looks. His teeming and eventful life has left its mark. He already uses spectacles for reading and writing, and his face bears evidence of much mental work and responsibility. He is a singular combination of youthfulness and age. He loves to wear rather old-fashioned-looking hats and clothes. On the other hand, when away from work he is often full of fun and boyish pranks.

MRS. WINSTON CHURCHILL.

Photo. Lallie Charles.

MR. AND MRS. WINSTON CHURCHILL IN HOLIDAY MOOD AT SANDWICH.

Photo. Sport & General.

No account of Mr. Churchill would be complete without a reference to his wife and children. Mrs. Churchill is an altogether delightful person. In addition to being very pretty, she possesses that indefinite and remarkable charm which is so attractive. She is very bright and vivacious, and full of good humoured, witty little sayings. She is a wonderful combination. She combines the beauty, appearance, style, taste, and distinguished manner of a great lady with the common sense, tact, and worldly wisdom of the ordinary middle-class housewife.

[*Other articles in this series will follow in due course.*]

A Modern Arabian Night.

By O. HENRY.

Illustrated by Alfred Leete.

TO Carson Chalmers, in his rooms near the square, Phillips brought the evening post. Besides the routine correspondence there were two items bearing the same foreign postmark.

One of the incoming parcels contained a photograph of a woman. The other contained an interminable letter, over which Chalmers hung, absorbed, for a long time. The letter was from another woman; and it contained poisoned barbs, sweetly dipped in honey, and feathered with innuendoes concerning the photographed woman.

Chalmers tore this letter into a thousand bits and began to wear out his expensive rug by striding backwards and forwards upon it. Thus an animal from the jungle acts when it is caged, and thus a caged man acts when he is housed in a jungle of doubt.

By and by the restless mood was overcome. The rug was not an enchanted one. For sixteen feet he could travel along it; several hundred miles was beyond its power to aid.

Phillips appeared. He never entered; he invariably appeared, like a well-oiled genie.

"Will you dine here, sir, or out?" he asked.

"Here," said Chalmers, "and in half an hour." He listened glumly to the January blasts making an Æolian trombone of the empty street.

"Wait," he said to the disappearing genie. "As I came home across the end of the square I saw many men standing there in rows. There was one mounted upon something, talking. Why do those men stand in rows, and why are they there?"

"They are homeless men, sir," said Phillips. "The man standing on the box tries to get lodging for them for the night. People come round to listen and give him money. Then he sends as many as the money will pay for to some lodging-house. That is why they stand in rows;

"PHILLIPS, AS THOUGH HE USHERED A CARDINAL—OR HELD IN CHARGE A BURGLAR—WAFTED IN THE SHIVERING GUEST."

they get sent to bed in order as they come."

"By the time dinner is served," said Chalmers, "have one of those men here. He will dine with me."

"W-w-which——" began Phillips, stammering for the first time during his service.

"Choose one at random," said Chalmers.

"'I DO NOT ASK YOUR STORY,' SAID CHALMERS. WHIM WHICH PROMPTED ME TO SEND FOR

"You might see that he is reasonably sober—and a certain amount of cleanliness will not be held against him. That is all."

It was an unusual thing for Carson Chalmers to play the Caliph. But on that night he felt the inefficacy of conventional antidotes to melancholy. Something wanton and egregious, something high-flavoured and Arabian, he must have to lighten his mood.

On the half-hour Phillips had finished his duties as slave of the lamp. The waiters from the restaurant below had whisked aloft the delectable dinner. The dining table, laid for two, showed cheerily in the glow of the pink-shaded candles.

And now Phillips, as though he ushered a cardinal—or held in charge a burglar—wafted in the shivering guest who had been haled from the line of mendicant lodgers.

It is a common thing to call such men wrecks; if the comparison be used here it is the specific one of a derelict come to grief through fire. Even yet some flickering combustion illuminated the drifting hulk. His face and hands had been recently washed—a rite insisted upon by Phillips as a memorial to the slaughtered conventions. In the candle-light he stood, a flaw in the decorous fittings of the apartment. His face was a sickly white, covered almost to the eyes with a stubble the shade of a red Irish setter's coat. Phillips's comb had failed to control the pale brown hair, long matted, and conformed to the contour of a constantly worn hat. His eyes were full of a hopeless, tricky defiance like that seen in a cur's that is cornered by his tormentors. His shabby coat was buttoned high, but a quarter-inch of redeeming collar showed above it. His manner was singularly free from embarrassment when Chalmers rose from his chair across the round dining-table.

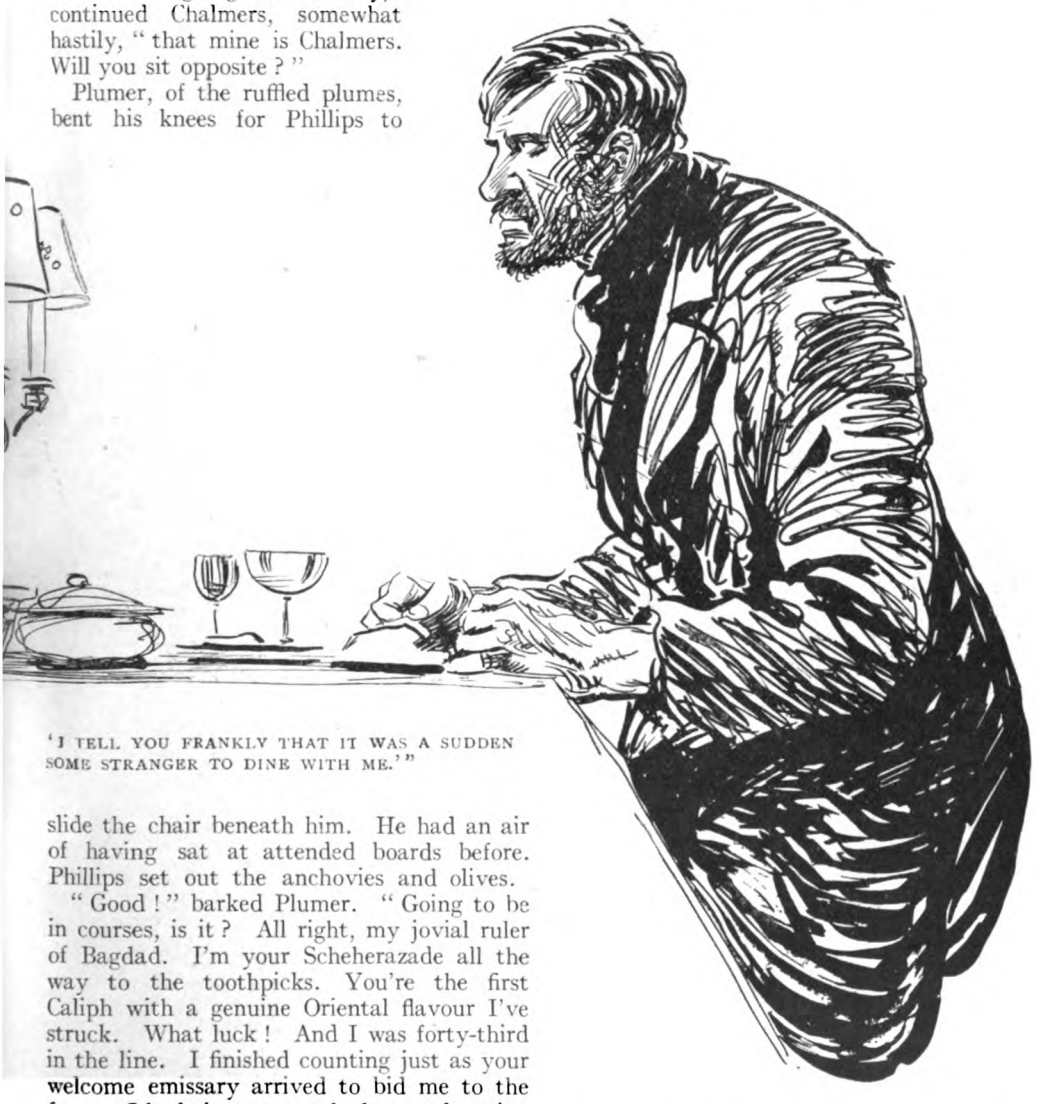
"If you will oblige me," said the host, "I

shall be glad to have your company at dinner."

"My name is Plumer," said the highway guest, in harsh and aggressive tones. "If you're like me, you like to know the name of the party you're dining with."

"I was going on to say," continued Chalmers, somewhat hastily, "that mine is Chalmers. Will you sit opposite?"

Plumer, of the ruffled plumes, bent his knees for Phillips to slide the chair beneath him. He had an air of having sat at attended boards before. Phillips set out the anchovies and olives.



'I TELL YOU FRANKLY THAT IT WAS A SUDDEN SOME STRANGER TO DINE WITH ME.'"

"Good!" barked Plumer. "Going to be in courses, is it? All right, my jovial ruler of Bagdad. I'm your Scheherazade all the way to the toothpicks. You're the first Caliph with a genuine Oriental flavour I've struck. What luck! And I was forty-third in the line. I finished counting just as your welcome emissary arrived to bid me to the feast. I had about as much chance of getting a bed to-night as I have of being the next Prime Minister. How will you have the sad story of my life, Mr. al Raschid—a chapter with each course, or the whole edition with the cigars and coffee?"

"The situation does not seem a novel one to you," said Chalmers, with a smile.

"By the chin-whiskers of the prophet—no!" answered the guest. "London's as full of cheap Haroun al Raschids as Bagdad is of fleas. I've been held up for my story with a loaded meal pointed at my head twenty times."

"I do not ask your story," said Chalmers. "I tell you frankly that it was a sudden whim which prompted me to send for some stranger to dine with me. I assure you you will not suffer through any curiosity of mine."

"Oh, fudge!" exclaimed the guest, enthusiastically tackling his soup; "I don't mind it a bit. I'm a regular Oriental magazine with a red cover and the leaves cut when the Caliph walks abroad. In fact, we fellows in

the bed-line have a sort of union rate for things of this sort. Somebody's always stopping and wanting to know what brought us down so low in the world. For a sandwich and a glass of beer I tell 'em that drink did it. For beef and cabbage and a cup of coffee I give 'em the hard-hearted landlord — six - months - in - the - hospital - lost - job story. A steak and a coin for a bed gets the tragedy of the swept-away fortune and the gradual descent. This is the first spread of this kind I've stumbled against. I haven't got a story to fit it. I'll tell you what, Mr. Chalmers: I'm going to tell you the truth for this, if you'll listen to it. It'll be harder for you to believe than the made-up ones."

An hour later the Arabian guest lay back with a sigh of satisfaction, while Phillips brought the coffee and cigars and cleared the table.

"Did you ever hear of Sherrard Plumer?" he asked, with a strange smile.

"I remember the name," said Chalmers. "He was a painter, I think, of a good deal of prominence a few years ago."

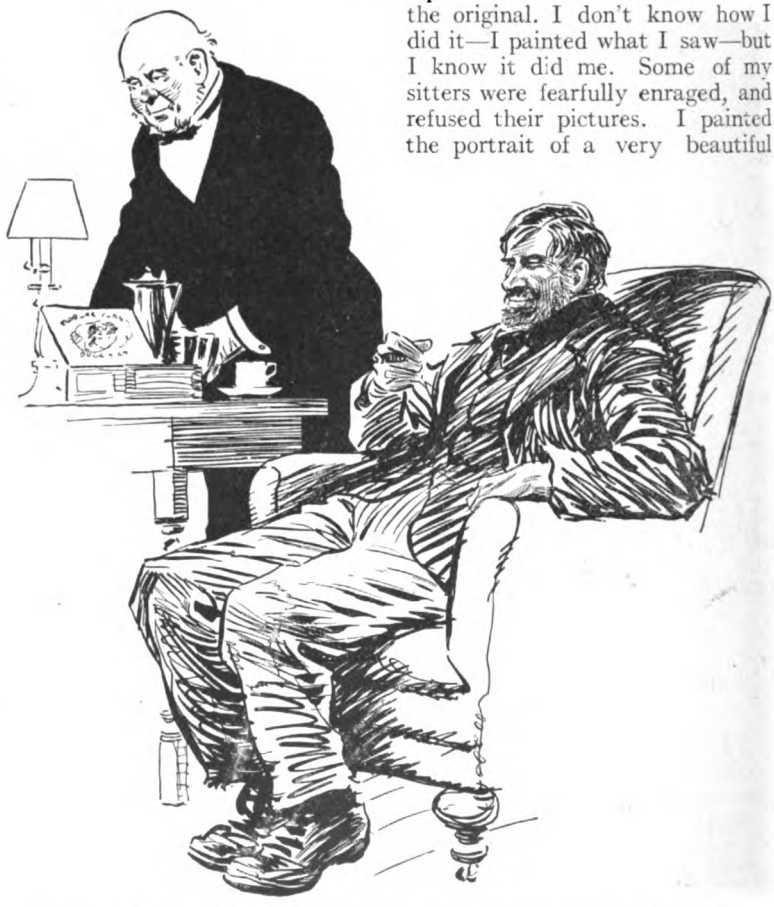
"Five years," said the guest. "Then I went down like a chunk of lead. I'm Sherrard Plumer! I sold the last portrait I painted for five hundred pounds. After that I couldn't have found a sitter for a gratis picture."

"What was the trouble?" Chalmers could not resist asking.

"Funny thing," answered Plumer, grimly. "Never quite understood it myself. For a while I swam like a cork. I broke into the swell crowd and got commissions right and left. The newspapers called me a fashionable painter. Then the funny things began to happen. Whenever I finished a picture people would come to see it, and whisper and look queerly at one another.

"I soon found out what the trouble was. I had a knack of bringing out in the face of a portrait the hidden character of the original. I don't know how I did it—I painted what I saw—but I know it did me. Some of my sitters were fearfully enraged, and refused their pictures. I painted the portrait of a very beautiful and popular society dame. When it was finished her husband looked at it with a peculiar expression on his face, and the next week he sued for divorce.

"I remember one case of a prominent banker who sat to me. While I had his portrait on exhibition in my studio an acquaintance of his came in to look at it. 'Bless me!' says he, 'does he really look like that?' I told him it was considered a faithful likeness,



"AN HOUR LATER THE ARABIAN GUEST LAY BACK WITH A SIGH OF SATISFACTION, WHILE PHILLIPS BROUGHT THE COFFEE AND CIGARS."

'I never noticed that expression about his eyes before,' said he; 'I think I'll drop into town and change my bank account.' He did drop into town, but the bank account was gone, and so was Mr. Banker.

"It wasn't long before they put me out of business. People don't want their secret meannesses shown up in a picture. They can smile and twist their own faces and deceive you, but the picture can't. I couldn't get an order for another picture, and I had to give up. I worked as a newspaper artist for a while, and then for a lithographer, but my work with them got me into the same trouble. If I drew from a photograph my drawing showed up characteristics and expressions that you couldn't find in the photograph, but they were in the original all right. The customers raised lively rows, especially the women, and I never could hold a job long. And pretty soon I was in the free-bed line. Does the truthful statement weary thee, O Caliph?"

"No, no," said Chalmers, earnestly; "you interest me very much. Did all your portraits reveal some unpleasant trait, or were there some that did not suffer from the ordeal of your peculiar brush?"

"Some? Yes," said Plumer. "Children generally; a good many women, and a sufficient number of men. All people aren't bad, you know. When they were all right the pictures were all right. As I said, I don't explain it, but I'm telling you facts."

On Chalmers's writing-table lay the photograph that he had received that day in the foreign mail. Ten minutes later he had Plumer at work making a sketch from it in pastels. At the end of an hour the artist rose and stretched wearily.

"It's done," he yawned. "You'll excuse me for being so long. I got interested in the job. Lord! but I'm tired. No bed last night, you know. Guess it'll have to be 'good night' now, O Commander of the Faithful!"

Chalmers went as far as the door with him and slipped some notes into his hand.

"Oh, I'll take 'em," said Plumer. "All that's included in the fall. Thanks. And for the very good dinner. I shall sleep on feathers to-night and dream of Bagdad. I hope it won't turn out to be a dream in the morning. Farewell, most excellent Caliph!"

Again Chalmers paced restlessly upon his rug. But his beat lay as far from the table whereon lay the pastel sketch as the room would permit. Twice, thrice, he tried to approach it, but failed. He could see the dun and gold and brown of the colours, but there was a wall about it built by his fears that kept him at a distance. He sat down and tried to calm himself. He sprang up and rang for Phillips.

"There is a young artist in this building," he said, "—a Mr. Reineman—do you know which is his apartment?"

"Top floor, front, sir," said Phillips.

"Go up and ask him to favour me with his presence here for a few minutes."

Reineman came at once. Chalmers introduced himself.

"Mr. Reineman," said he, "there is a little pastel sketch on yonder table. I should be glad if you would give me your opinion of it as to its artistic merits and as a picture."

The young artist advanced to the table and took up the sketch. Chalmers half turned away, leaning upon the back of a chair.

"How—do—you—find it?" he asked, slowly.

"As a drawing," said the artist, "I can't praise it enough. It's the work of a master—bold and fine and true. It puzzles me a little; I haven't seen any pastel work nearly as good for years."

"The face, man — the subject — the original—what would you say of that?"

"The face," said Reineman, "is the face of one of God's own angels. May I ask who——?"

"My wife!" shouted Chalmers, wheeling, and pouncing upon the astonished artist, gripping his hand and pounding his back. "She is travelling abroad. Take that sketch, boy, and paint the picture of your life from it, and leave the price to me."

Resurgam

By R. RAMSAY.

Illustrated by Warwick Reynolds.

I.

THE London parson had taken a night off to run down and preach for Stackhouse.

He liked the change. It was like dipping into another world to slip out of his own restless parish into the utterly different atmosphere of this quiet country town. It had struck him most in the pulpit, when the lights went up on the sleepy congregation and he gave out a concluding hymn. How alike they were; all one pattern, all known to each other, all leading the same staid, ordinary lives. What a blessed tonic, his brief sojourn in this placid community.

He puffed out his chest, drinking in the soft night air that was so good to swallow. He was a big man and burly, and the narrow pavement would hardly hold the three of them abreast, so he was walking between the other two down the middle of the darkened street. They passed various worshippers in the glimmer—families, friends, and sweethearts—all of them pausing to say good night. Such a peaceable little town and so friendly! It struck him again as comical that it should have been Stackhouse and not himself who had had a nervous breakdown last summer.

He burst out chuckling, and then, on the point of sharing his amusement at such an anomaly, was discreet. Those highly-strung individuals were so touchy. And Stackhouse did not seem in the humour for chaffing. His mouth was set in an odd line of strained endurance and he hardly spoke. His long, lean, ascetic figure had something monkish about it as he stalked along in his cassock. His eyes were staring into the gloom ahead.

Mrs. Stackhouse, on the other side, was making up for her husband's silence. Robinson had had no idea she was such a chattering woman. It began to annoy him. It seemed to him that there was a suggestion of hysteria in her incessant prattle.

Near the vicarage gate they overtook a woman of the charwoman class, and the vicar's wife hailed her with the usual salutation and asked why Bessy had missed Sunday-school. The woman unlatched the gate for them. She had a small child with her, and spoke for its benefit in a mincing tone.

"Bessy's bin a very bad girl, ma'am. She's been telling lies."

"Oh, dear!" said Mrs. Stackhouse, properly scandalized.

"Yes, ma'am; the young monkey! She *will* have it her lady, as used to, sat with her on Sunday night."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Stackhouse again, but swiftly. "Nonsense, nonsense!"

She whisked through the gate, which clanged after them, leaving the woman outside with the infant, unadmonished, hanging to her skirt with a finger in its mouth. In the light of the hall lamp she glanced furtively at her husband.

"My dear boy!" she said, hurriedly, almost wildly; "a child of four——!"

Stackhouse dropped his eyes from hers, and lifted his hand with a curious gesture as if he were wiping the sweat from his brow.

Inside the house Mrs. Stackhouse fled to the kitchen to hurry that uncomfortable meal called supper, and the two men waited a minute or two by the study fire.

"Awfully good of you to come down, Robinson," said the vicar. He spoke in a strained voice; there was something in it that sounded like expectation, like some faint hope; but the Londoner, for all his alertness, had not the clue. He noticed, however, that his host's knuckles gleamed white as he gripped hard on the edge of the chimney-piece. These long, weedy men had no stamina, physical or nervous. It must have been his temperament, certainly not his surroundings, that had made Stackhouse go to pieces.

"Good of you to ask me," he said, politely. "I love this quiet place. Such a contrast to my parish! You should see us up there, how crowded, quarrelling and fighting. I'm afraid that sea voyage didn't set you up altogether?"

"I thought it had, though," said Stackhouse, abruptly. "When I came back——"

He shut his mouth suddenly in the middle of the sentence, but looked hard at his fellow-priest. In his look was wistfulness, and an imminent despair.

"I'd like to ask you something," he said, "but—I dare not." He let go the chimney-piece and led the way into the dining-room, where Mrs. Stackhouse was calling them. She was too anxiously hospitable for comfort, bouncing up and down behind her coffee-pot, fussing about the food, and rattling on feverishly; but keeping, the visitor could see, a distracted eye on her husband. There was not much coherence in her prattle, and sometimes she lost the thread of it and looked for

a minute helpless. Only at such disconcerting moments could the Londoner, coming to the rescue, get a word in.

Why would the woman insist on talking, and what was she afraid of? Some outbreak of nerves on the part of the silent man? Was it pure hysteria on her part, or was she trying to cover some private fear?

He seized the first opportunity to take his share in the conversation, mildly humorous, but conscious all the while of the peculiar strain in the atmosphere. And then, incidentally, he remembered something.

"By the way," he said, "you lucky people, you know all your congregation. Who is the lady who sat in the side aisle alone in the seat next the pillar? A singularly interesting face——"

Mrs. Stackhouse started violently.

"Wh—what was she like?" she asked.

"Rather eager and sad," said Robinson, reflecting, "but quite a girl. She had a pointed chin, and dark hair, I think, and large, dark eyes—penetrating eyes; and she wore some kind of glittering jewel hung round her neck. It was her troubled expression that struck me first——"

He broke off astonished. For Stackhouse had stood up and was staring at him, gripping the table, leaning over. His look was half incredulous, half unspeakable relief.

"Then," he said, in a choked voice, "you, too, saw her. Thank Heaven! I am not mad."

Mrs. Stackhouse hid her face suddenly in her hands and burst into an uncontrollable fit of crying.

The visitor looked from one to the other in real alarm. He could see nothing in his harmless remark to affect them so deeply, or to relax, as it seemed, an intolerable strain.

"I'm afraid——" he began.

Mrs. Stackhouse sat up and smiled.

"But we are so thankful to you," she said, still sobbing. "Oh, you can't imagine what a relief it is! You're an independent witness—unprejudiced—and you saw her. Oh, you don't know what it means to us. We were both so terrified that his mind was going——"

"Still," said the Londoner, puzzled, "I can't see how my mentioning that young lady——"

She interrupted him. Something like awe hushed her excited voice.

"The girl you saw in church," she said. "died last year."

"Impossible!" said Robinson.

Stackhouse—who was with difficulty controlling a nervous tremor that shook him from head to foot, but whose voice was steady—moved to the door.

"Let us go back to the study," he said, "and talk it over."

His whole manner was changed as he stood on the hearthrug looking down on his guest and his wife. He had lost the pathetic hesitation that Robinson had noticed in him that night, and recovered something of his old bearing of priestly pomp. "Most of us believe in the unseen," he pronounced; "but to find what belongs to the other world made visible—brought so close—is a dreadful shock. My wife thought it must be an hallucination; she thought I was going mad—and I, too, grew horribly afraid. You see, I had had that nervous breakdown before, and the doctors sent me away for six months. It looked as if the prescription had failed. We thought that my breakdown must have been the warning of a mental collapse. We—I can't tell you, Robinson, what we suffered. And yet I saw that poor girl, night after night, so plainly——"

"She was *such* a nice girl!" broke in Mrs. Stackhouse, in her gasping treble; "and such a help in the parish. We liked her so much. And, of course, we were getting no letters—the doctors had forbidden it; we had heard nothing whatever till we came home and they told us she had committed suicide soon after we went away. I thought the shock of it had been too much for George. No wonder—such a *good* girl, Mr. Robinson. She—she used to sit in that seat with the school children to keep them quiet. No one could have *dreamt* she could do anything so wicked——"

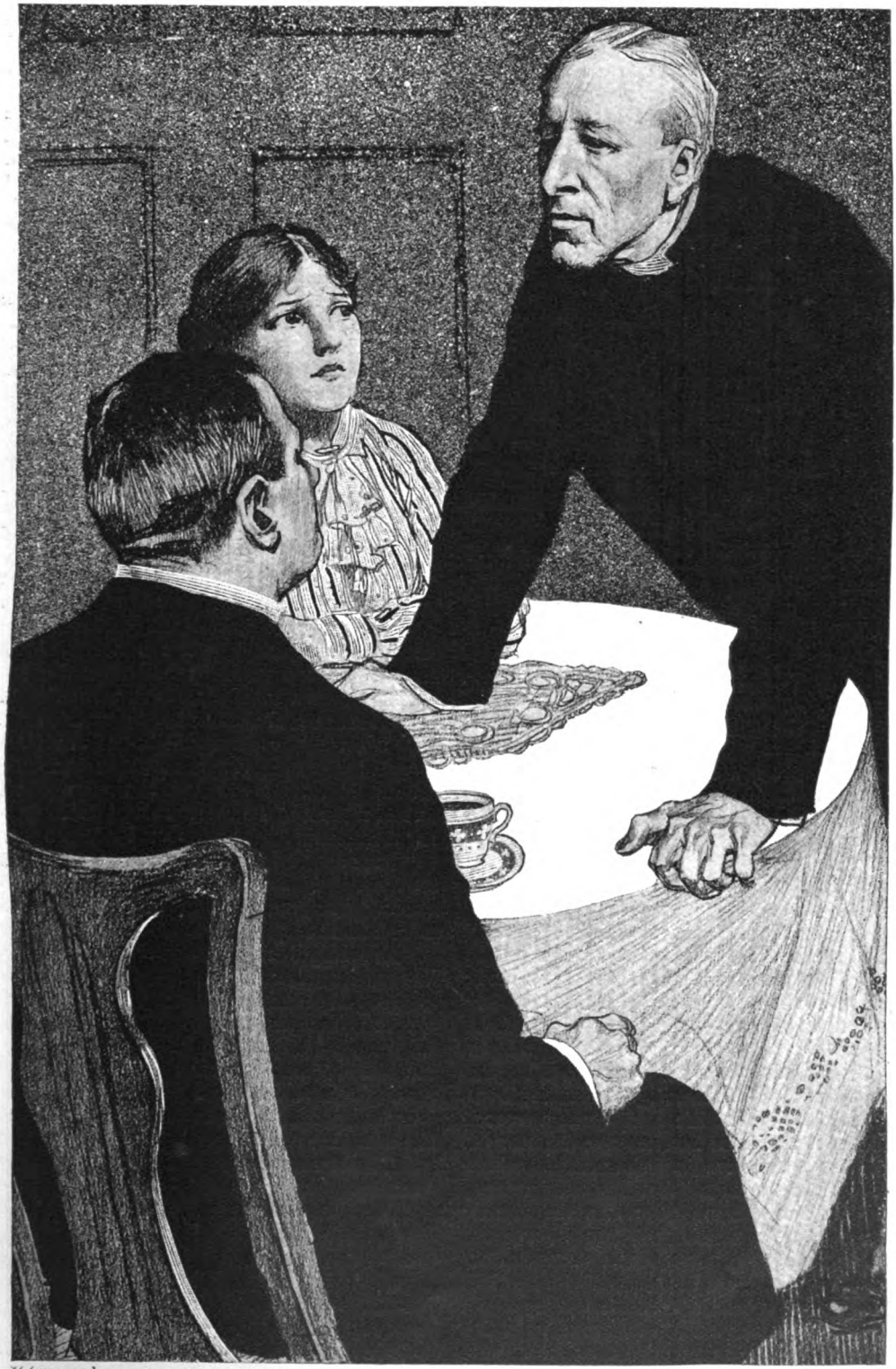
"Do you mean," said Robinson, bluntly, "that I saw a ghost?"

Stackhouse bent his head. His wife shivered suddenly as if she had not till then fully realized what it meant. Her mind had been so possessed by fear for the sanity of her husband; her relief had been too intense.

"I—suppose so," she said, in an awe-stricken whisper.

There followed a short pause; no sound but the fire crackling and the night wind sighing a little outside the room. Mrs. Stackhouse drew in nearer the fender as if she were very cold, and made a little gasp in her throat. The Londoner, looking from one to the other with his kindly, humorous glance, began to talk common sense.

"Of course it's a mistake," he said. "The girl I saw in church to-night was real. It can only be some chance likeness—perhaps a relation——"



"'THEN,' HE SAID, IN A CHOKED VOICE, 'YOU, TOO, SAW HER. THANK HEAVEN! I AM NOT MAD.'"

Stackhouse shook his head.

"No," he said. "There's no one like her. Poor girl, poor girl; her spirit cannot rest. God forgive me, there must have been something deadly wrong in my teaching, since it could not keep her from such a dreadful act. Is it strange that she looks reproachful?"

"But haven't you made inquiries?"

"We have not dared to speak of it to a soul!" cried Mrs. Stackhouse. "They would all have believed—as I did—that George was going mad. Oh, can't you see the horrible difficulty? And then——"

"I am not going to have my church made a public show for the rabble," said Stackhouse, violently. "I won't have that desecration! Can't you see them crowding here in their thousands, staring, scoffing, profaning a holy place? The newspapers would seize on the tale in a moment! For Heaven's sake, man, hold your tongue."

He stopped, and again that nervous tremor took him.

"Do you mind telling me the circumstances? Who was this girl?" said the Londoner, curious, but stoutly incredulous. "It certainly wasn't the face of a suicide that I saw——"

"No. It's incomprehensible," said Stackhouse, trying to recover a sort of calm. "She was the last person in the world, you would have said. How little we creatures know! She lived with her uncle, a solicitor here, and kept house for him. The uncle is my churchwarden. She was going out shortly to India to be married. There was nothing to worry her."

"Poor little Kitty!" said Mrs. Stackhouse, in a sobbing breath. "If only we had been there——"

"Yes, she might have confided in us," said Stackhouse. "But the priest I left in charge here was a young man, lately ordained; shy, and not observant. And nobody had noticed anything strange about her. Only her uncle said at the inquest that he was afraid she had been a little scared at the idea of her approaching marriage. She had lived in this place all her life, and it was a wrench to leave it; and she had not seen the man for five years. He was afraid she must have been brooding in secret and dreading the journey; and he blamed himself for thinking it only natural a girl should be fluttered at the prospect of such a tremendous step. Poor man, he must have been terribly distressed. One of the jury told me that if they could have found any possible excuse they would have brought it in misadventure, if only to spare his feelings——"

"But she went down to the chemist herself and bought the stuff," broke in Mrs. Stackhouse. "She told him she wanted it for an old dog that had been run over; she signed the poison book and asked him particularly if it would be painless. Of course, knowing her as he did, he never dreamt——"

"And the dog?" said Robinson.

"There was no dog," said Stackhouse. "No one in the house had heard of it. She locked her door as usual at night—she had done it ever since an alarm of burglars in the house years ago; and when they got frightened in the morning and burst it in she was found dead in bed. She had drunk the poison in the lemonade she took up with her every night."

"And they buried her with a mutilated service!" said Mrs. Stackhouse, shuddering.

"Poor girl!" said Stackhouse, and turned away his head.

The London parson broke the distressing silence.

"A very sad case," he said; "but aren't you letting it overcome your judgment? Why in this case beyond all others should her unhappy spirit be allowed to haunt the church? I dare say it is just what a miserable soul would wish, sorrowful, self-tormenting—if uncontrolled. But I see no reason why it should be permitted. And assuming it could be, I'm curious to know why she should appear to you and not to her own relation. *He* would have spoken of it, wouldn't he, if she had?"

"Poor man!" said Mrs. Stackhouse, with an hysterical laugh that she was unable to check; "he would have raised the whole neighbourhood."

"Probably," said Stackhouse, the grave line of his mouth relaxing, "but he shut up his house and went away; the loneliness was too much for him. And I hear that on his travels he seems to have come across a sensible woman who took him and married him. Some middle-aged person like himself, who had no ties and was feeling lonely. It's the best that could happen."

"The blinds were up as I passed the house yesterday," said Mrs. Stackhouse.

"Heavens, Robinson, what's to be done?" burst out Stackhouse. "Look at us, talking coolly in the face of this horror! I can't stand the thing much longer. Think of it, man! Week after week, there she sits, with her eyes fixed on me——"

"Oh, George, George!" said his wife, shuddering.

Robinson was sorry for them both. Evidently both of them were neurotic, and the tragic circumstance they related had affected them; their highly-strung temperaments, acting on each other, had worked them up to a really dangerous pitch. And Stackhouse hadn't enough to do. Perhaps it was worse for him to rust in this quiet parish than to wear himself out with work. The doctors had sent him on a sea voyage, had they? Months of idleness and too much introspection. Fools!

"Look here," he said, "you go up and take over my job for a bit, and I'll stop down here and discover something. You'll be giddy at first, but the organization's good, and I've got a regular martinet of a curate. He'll manage you and see you don't kill yourself. And I think Mrs. Stackhouse will find my house quite comfortable for a bachelor's. *I* want a holiday badly—and you'll soon shake off this obsession of yours in a London slum."

Mrs. Stackhouse looked up eagerly at her husband. Relief at the great suggestion shone in her eyes.

"It would be cowardly to do that," said Stackhouse, irresolutely. "I should feel as if I had deserted a poor soul that needs my help."

"You're not fit to help anyone in the present state of your nerves," said his fellow-parson, and clinched the argument like a Jesuit. "How do you know she wants your help more than mine? Didn't I see her too?"

II.

THE October sun shone aslant the quiet street as the Rev. Mr. Robinson marched along it to call on his—or, rather, on Stackhouse's truant churchwarden, Mr. Parker. He had a straw hat on and swung his stick.

Personally, he was hugely enjoying his interval of peace, and he had in his pocket a letter from his head curate extolling Stackhouse, who was working like a demon, and looked less ill. It only remained for Robinson to clear up the ghost worry in unmistakable fashion, which ought not to be too hard. He smiled. Odd tricks one's imagination played sometimes! Recollecting Stackhouse's unbalanced asseveration, he had himself experienced a slight thrill as he peered down the glimmering aisle on the following Sunday evening, and saw the same face that had impressed him before, the same dark eyes riveted on him. His robust intellect, that admitted all things to be possible, but few of them expedient, had been a little staggered by the sad intensity—imagination again—of her look. But a very commonplace incident had rescued him from any foolishness; just a little nodding child that had snuggled up against her as she gathered it in her arm.

He told himself that what he had to do was simply to make a few discreet inquiries and get acquainted with the disturbing young woman. He had spoken to the clerk after service, but that ancient worthy had not noticed who was sitting by the pillar; his sight, he explained, was not so good as it might be, with that chancy gas. Happen it was some stranger; folk was a bit shy of sitting that side because of the children fidgeting, and them boys—you couldn't keep them boys quiet! Happen it was a teacher?

Clearly there was no disquieting rumour current, no local gossip; there seemed to be no foundation for any supernatural hypothesis but the overwrought condition of the parson's nerves.

Robinson reached his destination, and pushed open the iron gate. Mr. Parker was out, but Mrs. Parker was at home, and the caller was marched into the drawing-room.

This was a mixture of ancient middle-class superstition and modern ease. It amused Robinson to compare the two, and even to track the ancestral album to its lurking-place behind a potted palm. While he waited he undid the stiff clasp and turned over the pages. Pity that people had given up that instructive custom of pillorying different generations for the good of posterity! It was an interesting study to look back and mark how family traits persisted, how they cropped up on occasion as ineradicable as weeds. He went through the book with the keen eye of an anthropologist. There was something elusive, something distantly familiar running through the whole collection. He must have met a member of that family at one time without knowing it. On the very last page he saw her; a photograph of a girl.

Breaking in on his moment of stupefaction Mrs. Parker sailed into the room, having furbished herself for the occasion with fresh and violent scent on her handkerchief. A dashing female, with quantities of blazing yellow hair and round eyes that stared and challenged; a splendid presence, indeed, in this sober house. But not at all the expected type of a middle-aged comforter. Much more like a firework.

She excused her husband in a high London

voice. He was obliged to be at his office. Everything was in a muddle owing to things being left so long to the clerks. It really was time they came back, though how she was to endure this place——! Still, of course, with a motor——! Dull, did he say? It was simply dreadful. She had always warned Jimmy that it would be too much for her, but he had persuaded her at last.

"How lucky for him!" said Robinson, politely. The lady agreed at once.

"Rather!" she said. "Poor Jimmy! He must have proposed to me twenty times in the last two years!"

The accelerated clatter of a tea-tray approached. The bride was not going to allow her one visitor to escape her. She began moving things on the table.

"I have just been looking through that album," said Robinson, turning it over as carelessly as he could. "That is a striking photograph on the last page. I fancy I have seen the original."

She uttered a little shriek and closed the book.

"Oh!" she said. "Don't you know? It's Mr. Parker's niece who committed suicide. A shocking thing, wasn't it? Haven't you heard about it? It was in all the papers!"

Eagerly she plunged into the story. His shocked countenance encouraged her to enlarge. He sat facing her across the gaudy little painted tea-cups ("a wedding present from one of my pals," she remarked) that surrounded the heavy silver pot.

She poured out the whole history as Robinson had heard it from his fellow-parson, but with amplifications. He heard what a queer temper poor Kitty had, and what a drag on a girl it was to be tied by a long engagement. When a man she hadn't seen for years wrote suddenly wanting her to come out at once and be married, no wonder the poor girl was terrified. Men alter so. He might have taken to drinking, he might even have grown a beard! And she didn't dare to back out of it, because she was a religious girl, and she'd promised; and very likely he needed her bit of money. She wasn't dependent on her uncle—oh, dear, no! Why, that heavy old tea-pot that made your arm ache belonged to her share! And she'd never stirred an inch from home. If Jimmy had had a grain of sense he would have put his foot down and said if the man really wanted her he must come and fetch her. But he didn't think of it, and so—and so—— Well, it must have sent her crazy. Look at her artfulness, making up that story about the dog, when she went out to buy the poison! Wasn't it awful how cunning a person could be, and yet not right in the head, of course!

Her ear-rings tinkled as she shook her head with an air of wisdom. Her eager relation was no more personal than that of anybody retailing the latest sensational case in the papers—except in so far as she possessed the distinction of inside knowledge. There was a certain pride in her glib recital. But she was utterly unaffected by any breath of superstition, any hint of the supernatural hovering.

"Did you know her well?" said Robinson, trying to shake off his strange feeling of mental numbness.

"Oh, my goodness, no!" she said. "I never saw her. I didn't get engaged to Jimmy till it was all over, and he came up to town more dead than alive, poor fellow, and told me how his circumstances had changed; and I was so sorry for him I just got married to him at once and off we went to Monte Carlo."

An incongruous picture presented itself to her listener's mind, the spectacle of this splendid person leading a dazed mourner by the scruff of his neck towards consolation. But the flicker of humour passed.

"I should like to meet your husband," he said. She took, or mistook, him to be severe.

"I'm afraid we have both been naughty," she said. "I know we have never been to church, and Mr. Parker a churchwarden, too! I used always to call him 'the churchwarden' when I wanted to tease him—and he used to get red and say it was a very important office. I must really apologize. And the cook says nobody will call on me till we've appeared at church. I'll *promise* to bring him next Sunday evening. The cook says it used to be his turn to take round the plate at night."

Eagerly, but with condescension, she gave this undertaking to satisfy the conventions (the cook having omitted to point out the superior social stamp of Morning Service), and effusively she shook hands. Robinson got out of the house and into the empty street. His mind began to work slowly, in jerks, like a jarred machine.

It was the original of that dead girl's photograph he had seen.

Something remarkably like panic shook him. He drew his hand across his forehead and found that it was wet.

By an odd trick of memory his own involuntary gesture reminded him of Stackhouse, who had wiped the sweat from his brow like that when the charwoman complained that

her little girl had been telling lies. The insignificant incident, printed unconsciously on his brain, came back to him now with an unearthly meaning. He remembered that baby face, wide-eyed, insistent, too young to explain, too little to understand. And he remembered a sleepy head supported safely within a protecting arm.

"Good Lord!" he said, and his ruddy face was pale.

III.

It was a hot, full church, the atmosphere thick with the breath of humanity and the purring gas. Evening service was popular with the multitude, and a wet night had driven all and sundry who would have been taking walks in the lanes to the only alternative. They pushed in, furling their dripping umbrellas and stacking them in the porch, till there was scarcely an inch of room in the middle aisle. And as the organ ceased rumbling and the packed congregation prepared to shout out the opening hymn a small, rabbit-faced man came stealing up the nave.

In his wake, plumed and hatted and scented, advanced Mrs. Parker, making her triumphal entry. Indisputably there was nobody in the church dressed like her. The man ushered her into her place, and took up his own, with a countenance of uneasy rapture, beside this tremendous fine bird he had somehow caged.

Robinson, at the reading-desk, shot one furtive glance at the side aisle and withdrew his eyes. He was conscious of a mixed sensation of relief and of disappointment. His timorous look had travelled along rows of blank, unimportant faces, and seen nothing to send a shock to his sober sense. The appearance, whatever under God's mysterious providence it might be, was not there. He took heart to rate himself inwardly for a pusillanimous yielding to superstition. Obstinately he refused to let his attention wander and pinned his eyes to his book.

The service wore on, chant and psalm, prayer and preaching. He found himself halting unaccountably in the pulpit; the terse, vigorous words he sought for became jumbled in his head. In his struggle to keep the thread of his discourse and be lucid he had to fight a growing horror of expectation, a kind of strange foreknowledge that pressed on him. His eyes searched the dim spaces while his tongue stumbled over platitudes. He tried vainly to pierce the veil of mystery that hung over the darkened church. It was not time yet.

And then the glimmering lights went up.

She was there, in her place by the pillar, with her tragic eyes raised to him and the jewel glittering on her breast. All the other faces around her seemed indistinct, as if she alone were real—and yet the seat had been packed with worshippers standing up finding the places for the concluding hymn. Straight and still she stood among them, and, filled with a sense of impending climax, Robinson found it impossible to turn from gazing and go down the pulpit stairs. He, too, waited, watching, holding his breath, while the organ struck up and the churchwardens began to take the collection under cover of a lusty, long-winded hymn.

All at once, without consciously looking in that direction, he became aware that Mr. Parker's place was vacant. He saw the small, rabbit-faced man drawing himself up to be stiff and pompous, carrying out his duty. Row after row he collected gravely, passing down the nave and coming up the side aisle. With a shock that staggered him for a moment the watcher realized that it was Mr. Parker's part to collect on that side of the church. Would nothing happen, or would he, too, be granted the power to see?

The people were swinging through the third verse to an under-current of tinkling pennies. Nearer and nearer the man approached. Mechanically the watcher in the pulpit counted. Three more rows—two more—he had nearly reached her, but had made no sign. One more row and then—*crash!* The plate of coins went spinning in all directions. The man lay still where he had dropped on his face.

He did not die immediately. The numbing paralysis took a little time to kill. But he lay like a trodden insect, muttering, muttering. Blank terror was fixed immutably on his face.

It was clear from his own words that he had murdered his niece, but even the doctors did not know how much was intelligent confession and how much the involuntary betrayal of a stricken brain automatically reeling off old thoughts and guarded secrets.

"She'll not have me, she'll not have me; she says I'm not rich enough——"

That was his continual refrain, the fixed idea that had obsessed him, and that found utterance now at intervals, breaking even through the more coherent statements that had been taken down.

"It was all Bill's fault. Why didn't he leave his money to me instead of the girl? If I had it now; if I had it——! That fool

of a girl, she thinks of nothing but her lover——"

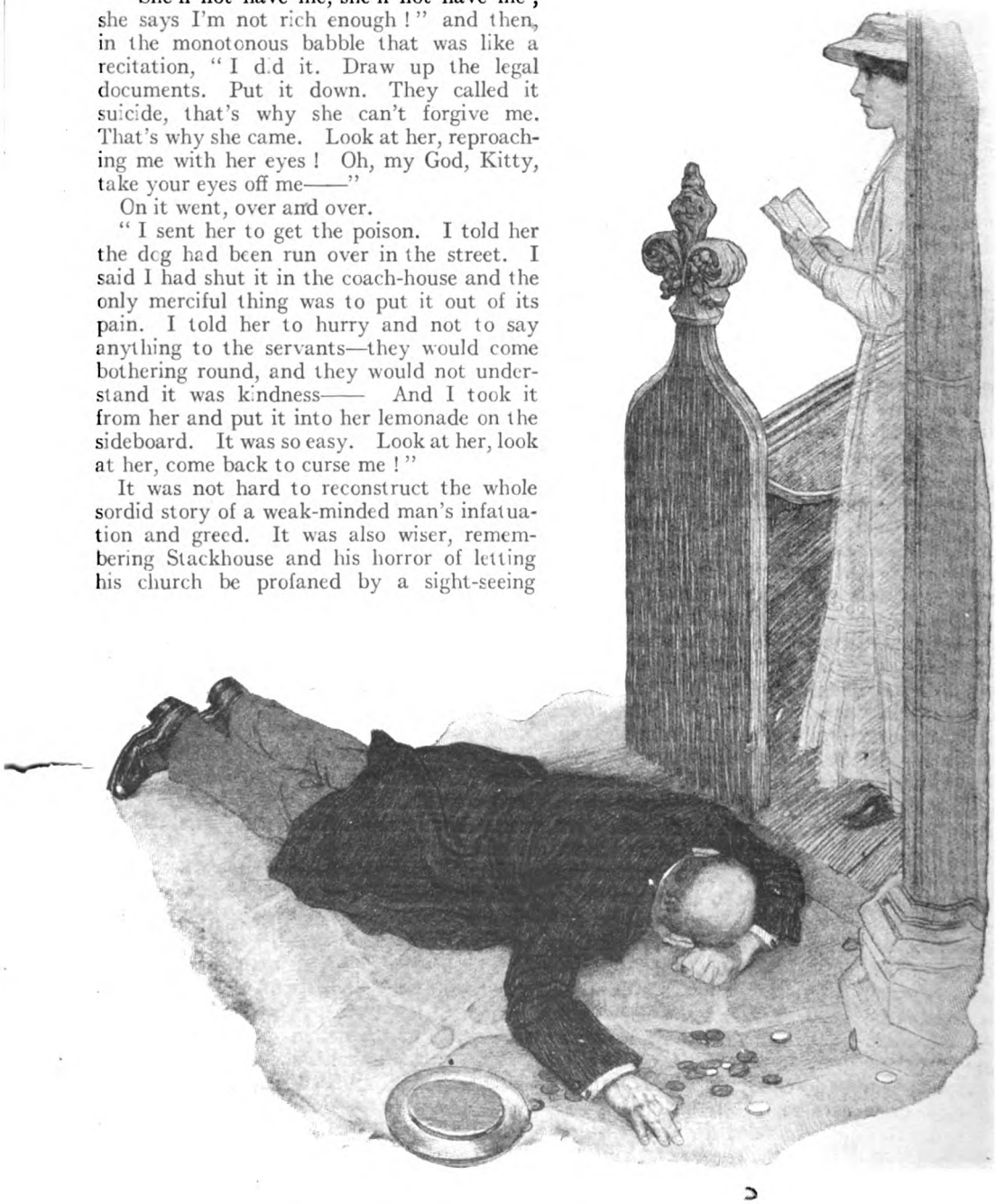
Only for a moment the muttering voice would pause. Robinson, watching beside him, would speak of the everlasting mercy.

"She'll not have me, she'll not have me; she says I'm not rich enough!" and then, in the monotonous babble that was like a recitation, "I did it. Draw up the legal documents. Put it down. They called it suicide, that's why she can't forgive me. That's why she came. Look at her, reproaching me with her eyes! Oh, my God, Kitty, take your eyes off me——"

On it went, over and over.

"I sent her to get the poison. I told her the dog had been run over in the street. I said I had shut it in the coach-house and the only merciful thing was to put it out of its pain. I told her to hurry and not to say anything to the servants—they would come bothering round, and they would not understand it was kindness—— And I took it from her and put it into her lemonade on the sideboard. It was so easy. Look at her, look at her, come back to curse me!"

It was not hard to reconstruct the whole sordid story of a weak-minded man's infatuation and greed. It was also wiser, remembering Stackhouse and his horror of letting his church be profaned by a sight-seeing crowd, to acquiesce in the public view that it was remorse that had brought on the stroke that killed Kitty's uncle. And so Robinson held his peace.



"THE MAN LAY STILL WHERE HE HAD DROPPED ON HIS FACE."

Climbing for Goats.

By STEWART EDWARD WHITE.

Illustrated by G. Henry Evison.

Mr. Stewart Edward White, one of the foremost of America's school of "open-air" novelists, has during the last few years won a wide popularity in this country with his novels, "The Blazed Trail," "Gold," and other stories of pioneer life in the States. He is well-known, too, as a hunter of big game, and his two volumes describing his shooting expeditions in Africa—"The Land of Footprints" and "African Camp Fires"—are written in the racy, vivid style with which the following thrilling experience is told. Not long ago, ex-President Roosevelt paid Mr. White the tribute of saying that he was one of the finest shots he had ever encountered in all his African hunting trips.

NEAR the point at which the great Continental Divide of the Rocky Mountains crosses the Canadian border, another great range edges in toward it from the south. Between these ranges lies a space of from twenty to forty miles, and midway between them flows a clear, wonderful river through dense forests.

A wilder, lovelier, grander country would be hard to find. Save for the Forest Service and a handful of fur trappers it is uninhabited. Its streams abound in trout, its dense forests with elk and white-tailed deer, its balder hills with black-tailed deer, its upper basins with grizzly bears, its higher country with sheep and that dizzy climber, the Rocky Mountain goat.

He who would enter this region descends at a little station on the Great Northern, and thence proceeds by pack train at least four days, preferably more, out into the wilderness. It is a chilly journey. The frost has hardened the mud in the trail. One's feet and hands ache cruelly. At night camp is made near the banks of the river, whence always one may in a few moments catch as many trout as are needed—fine, big fighting trout.

By the end of three or four days the prospect opens out. Tremendous cliffs rise sheer from the bottom of the valley; up tributary canyons one can see a dozen miles to distant snow ranges glittering and wonderful. Nearer at hand the mountains rise above timber-line to great buttes and precipices.

The First Climb.

Fisher, Frank, and I had been hunting for elk in the dense forests along the foot of one of these mountains, and for a half day, drenched with sweat, had toiled cautiously up and down steep slopes, trying to go quietly, trying to keep our wind, trying to pierce the secrets of the leafy screen always about us. We were tired of it.

"Let's go to the top and look for goats," suggested Frank. "There are some goat cliffs on the other side of her. It isn't very far."

It was not very far, as measured by the main ranges, but it was a two hours' steady climb, nearly straight up. We would toil doggedly for a hundred feet, or until our wind gave out and our hearts began to pound distressingly, then we would rest a moment. After doing this a few hundred times we would venture a look upward, confidently expecting the summit to be close at hand. It seemed as far off as ever. We suffered a dozen or so of these disappointments, and then learned not to look up. This was only after we had risen above timber-line to the smooth, rounded rock and grass shoulder of the mountain. Then three times we made what we thought was a last spurt, only to find ourselves on a "false summit." After a while we grew resigned. We realized that we were never going to get anywhere, but were to go on for ever, without ultimate purpose and without hope, pushing with tired legs, gasping with inadequate lungs. When we had fully made up our minds to that, we arrived. This is typical of all high mountain-climbing—the dogged, hard, hopeless work that can never reach an accomplishment, and then at last the sudden unexpected culmination.

We topped a gently rounding summit, took several deep breaths into the uttermost cells of our distressed lungs, walked forward a dozen steps, and found ourselves looking over the sheer brink of a precipice. So startlingly unforeseen was the swoop into blue space

"WE FOUND OURSELVES LOOKING OVER THE SHEER BRINK OF A PRECIPICE."

that I recoiled hastily, feeling a little dizzy. Then I recovered, and stepped forward cautiously for another look. As with all sheer precipices, the lip on which we stood seemed slightly to overhang, so that in order to see one had apparently to crane away over, quite off balance. Only by the strongest effort of the will is one able to rid oneself of the notion that the centre of gravity is about to plunge one off head-first into blue space. For it was fairly blue space below our precipice. We could see birds wheeling below us, and then below them again, very tiny, the fall away of talus, and the tops of trees in the basin below.

Across the face of the cliff below us ran irregular tiny ledges; buttresses ended in narrow peaks; "chimneys" ran down irregularly to the talus. Here were supposed to dwell the goats.

We proceeded along the crest, spying eagerly. We saw tracks, but no animals. By now it was four o'clock, and past time to turn campwards. We struck down the mountain on a diagonal that should take us home. For some distance all went well enough. To be sure, it was very steep, and we had to pay due attention to balance and sliding. Then a rock wall barred our way. It was not a very large rock wall. We went below it. After a hundred yards we struck another. By now the first had risen until it towered far above us, a sheer grey cliff behind which the sky was very blue. We skirted the base of the second and lower cliff. It led us to another, and still another. Each of these we passed on the talus beneath it, but with increasing difficulty, owing to the fact that the wide ledges were pinching out. At last we found ourselves cut off from farther progress. To our right rose tier after tier of great cliffs, serenely and loftily unconscious of any little insects like ourselves that might be pottering around their feet. Straight ahead the ledge ceased to exist. To our left was

a hundred-foot drop to the talus that sloped down to the canyon. That canyon did not look so very far away, and we desired mightily to reach it. The only alternative to getting straight down was to climb back the weary way we had come, and that meant all night without food, warm clothing, or shelter on a snow and ice mountain.

Therefore we scouted that hundred-foot drop to our left very carefully. It seemed hopeless, but at last I found a place where a point of the talus ran up to a level not much below our own. The only difficulty was that between ourselves and that point of talus extended a piece of sheer wall. I slung my rifle over my back and gave myself to a serious consideration of that wall. Then I began to work out across its face.

The principle of safe climbing is to maintain always three points of suspension. That is to say, one should keep either both footholds and one handhold, or both handholds and one foothold. Failing that, one is taking long chances. With this firmly in mind, I spidered out across the wall, testing every projection and cranny before I trusted any weight to it. One apparently solid projection as big as my head came away at the first touch and went bouncing off into space. Finally I stood, or rather sprawled, almost within arm's length of a tiny scrub pine growing solidly in a crevice just over the talus. Once there, our troubles were over; but there seemed no way of crossing. For the moment it actually looked as though four feet only would be sufficient to turn us back.

At last, however, I found a toe-hold halfway across. It was a very slight crevice, and not over two inches deep. The toe of a boot would just hold there without slipping. Unfortunately there were no handholds above it. After thinking the matter over, however, I made up my mind to violate, for this occasion only, the rules for climbing. I inserted the toe, gathered myself, and with one smooth swoop swung myself across and grabbed that tiny pine.

Fisher now worked his way out and crossed in the same manner. But Frank was too heavy for such gymnastics. Fisher therefore took a firm grip on the pine, inserted his toe in the crevice, and hung on with all his strength while Frank crossed on his shoulders!

The Second and Third Climbs.

Once more, lured by the promise of the tracks we had seen, we climbed this same mountain, but again without results. By now, you may be sure, we had found an easier way home. This was a very hard day's work, but uneventful.

Now, four days later, I crossed the river, and set off alone to explore in the direction of the Continental Divide. Of course, I had no intention of climbing for goats, or indeed of hunting very hard for anything. My object was an idle go-look-see. Equally of course, after I had tramped around most happily for a while up the wooded stream-bed of that canyon, I turned sharp to the right and began to climb the slope of the spur, running out at right angles to the main ranges, that constituted one wall of my canyon. It was fifteen hundred nearly perpendicular feet of hard scrambling through windfalls. Then, when I had gained the ridge, I thought I might as well keep along it a little distance. And then, naturally, I saw the main peaks not so *very* far away, and was in for it.

On either side of me the mountain dropped away abruptly. I walked on a knife-edge, steeply rising. Great canyons yawned close at either hand, and over across were leagues of snow mountains.

In the canyon from which I had emerged a fine rain had been falling. Here it had turned to wet sleet. As I mounted, the slush under foot grew firmer, froze, then changed to dry powdery snow. This change was interesting and beautiful, but rather uncomfortable, for my boots, soaked through by the slush, now froze solid and scraped various patches of skin from my feet.

The ridge mounted steadily. After I had gained to two thousand three hundred feet above the canyon I found that the ridge dipped to a saddle six hundred feet lower. It really grieved me to give up that hard-earned six hundred, and then to buy it back again by another hard, slow, toilsome climb. Again I found my way barred by some unsuspected cliffs about sixty feet in height. Fortunately they were well broken, and I worked my way to the top by means of ledges.

Atop this the snow suddenly grew deeper and the ascent more precipitous. I fairly wallowed along. In spite of my heavy exertions I began to feel the cold, so I unslung my rucksack and put on my buckskin shirt. The snow had become very light and feathery. The high, still buttes and crags of the main divide were right before me. Light fog wreaths drifted and eddied slowly, now concealing and revealing the solemn crags and buttresses. Over everything—the rocks, the few stunted and twisted small trees, the very surface of the snow itself—lay a heavy rime of frost. This rime stood out in long, slender

"FISHER HUNG ON WITH ALL HIS STRENGTH WHILE FRANK CROSSED ON HIS SHOULDERS."

needles an inch to an inch and a half in length, sparkling and fragile and beautiful. It seemed that a breath of wind or even a loud sound would precipitate this glittering panoply to ruin; but in all the really awesome silence and hushed breathlessness of that strange upper world there was nothing to disturb them. The only motion was that of the idly drifting fog-wreaths; the only sound was that made by the singing of the blood in my ears. I felt as though I were in a world holding its breath.

It was piercing cold. I ate a biscuit and a few prunes, tramping energetically to and fro to keep warm. I could see in all directions now—an infinity of bare peaks, with hardly a glimpse of forests or streams or places where things might live. Goats are certainly either fools or great poets.

After a half-hour of fruitless examination of the cliffs I perforce had to descend. The trip back was long. It had the added interest in that it was bringing me nearer water. No thirst is quite so torturing as that which afflicts one who climbs hard in cold high altitudes. The throat and mouth seem to shrivel and parch. Psychologically it is even worse than the desert thirst, because in cold air it is so unreasonable. Finally it became so unendurable that I turned down from the spur-ridge long before I should otherwise have done so, and did a good deal of extra work merely to reach a little sooner the stream at the bottom of the canyon. When I reached it, I found that here it flowed underground.

Other Climbs.

For ten days we hunted and fished. When the opportunity offered, we made a goat-survey of a new place. Finally, as time grew short, we realized that we must concentrate our energies in one effort, if we were to get specimens of this most desirable of all American big game. Therefore Fisher, Frank, Harry, and I, leaving our other two companions and the majority of the horses at the base camp, packed a few days' provisions and started in for the highest peaks of all.

We journeyed up an unknown canyon eighteen miles long, heavily wooded in the bottoms, with great mountains overhanging, and with a beautiful clear trout stream singing down its bed. The first day we travelled ten hours. One man was always in front cutting out windfalls or other obstructions. I should be afraid to guess how many trees we chopped through that day. Another man scouted ahead for the best route amid difficulties. The other two performed the soul-destroying task of getting the horses to follow the appointed way. After three o'clock we began to hope for horse-feed. At dark we reluctantly gave it up. The forest remained unbroken. We had to tie the poor unfed horses to trees, while we ourselves searched diligently and with only partial success for tiny spots level enough for our beds. It was very cold that night, and nobody was comfortable, the horses least of all.

Next morning we were out and away by daylight. If we could not find horse-feed inside of four hours, we would be forced to retreat. Three hours of the four went by. Then Harry and I held the horses while our companions scouted ahead rapidly. We nearly froze, for in that deep valley the sun did not rise until nearly noon. Through an opening we could see back to a tremendous sheer butte rising over three thousand feet* by a series of very narrow terraced ledges. We named it the Citadel, so like was it to an ancient proud fortress.

Fisher reported first. He had climbed a tree, but had seen no feed. Ten minutes later Frank returned. He had found the track of an ancient avalanche close under the mountain, and in that track grew coarse grasses. We pushed on, and there made camp.

It was a queer enough camp. Our beds we spread in the various little spots among the roots and hummocks we imagined to look the most even. The fire we had to build in quite another place. All around us the lodge pole pines, firs, and larches drew close and dark and damp. Only to the west the snow ranges showed among the tree-tops like great looming white clouds.

For two days we lived high among the glaciers and snow crags, taking tremendous tramps, seeing wonderful peaks, frozen lakes, sheer cliffs, the tracks of grizzlies in numbers, the tiny sources of great streams, and the infinity of upper spaces. But no goats, and no tracks of goats. Little by little we eliminated the possibilities of the country accessible to us. Leagues in all directions, as far as the eye could reach, was plenty of other country, all equally good for goats, but it was not within reach of us from this canyon and our time was up. Finally we dropped back and made camp at the last feed, a mile or so below the Citadel. Two ranges at right angles here converged, and the Citadel rose like a tower at the corner. Here was our last chance.

Goats!

As we were finishing breakfast my eye was attracted to a snow speck some two thousand feet above us and slightly eastward, that somehow looked to me different from other snow specks. For nearly a minute I stared at it through my glasses. At last the speck moved. The game was in sight!

We drew straws for the shot, and Fisher won. Then we began our climb. It was the same old story of pumping lungs and pounding hearts, but with the incentive before us we made excellent time. A shallow ravine and a fringe of woods afforded us the cover we needed. At the end of an hour and a half we crawled out of our ravine and to the edge of the trees. There across a steep canyon, and perhaps four hundred yards away, were the goats, two of them, lying on the edge of small cliffs. We could see them very plainly, but they were too far for a sure shot. After examining them to our satisfaction we wormed our way back.

"The only sure way," I insisted, "is to climb clear to the top of the ridge, go along it, on the other side, until we are above and beyond the goats, and then to stalk them down hill."

That meant a lot more hard work, but in the end the plan was adopted. We resumed our interminable and toilsome climbing.

The ridge proved to be of the knife-edge variety, and covered with snow. From a deep, wide, walled-in basin on the other side rose the howling of two brush wolves. We descended a few feet to gain safe concealment,

* Three thousand three hundred and fifty feet to be exact. We later measured it.

"I DROPPED THE BEAD OF MY FRONT SIGHT ON HIS SHOULDER."

walked as rapidly as possible to the point above the goats, and then, with the utmost caution, began our descent.

In the last two hundred yards is the essence of big-game stalking. The hunter must move noiselessly, he must keep concealed, he must determine *at each step* just what the effect of that step has been in the matters of noise and of altering the point of view. It is necessary to spy sharply, not only from the normal elevations of a man's shoulders, but also stooping to the waist-line, and even down to the knees. An animal is just as suspicious of legs as of heads, and much more likely to see them.

The shoulder of the mountain here consisted of a series of steep grass curves, ending in short cliff jump-offs. Scattered and stunted trees and tree-groups grew here and there. In thirty minutes we had made our distance and recognized the fact that our goats must be lying at the base of the next ledge. Motioning Harry to the left and Fisher to the front, I myself moved to the right to cut off the game should it run in that direction. Ten seconds later I heard Fisher shoot, then Harry opened up, and in a moment a goat ran across the ledge fifty yards below me. With a thrill of the greatest satisfaction, I dropped the gold bead of my front sight on his shoulder.

The bullets knocked him off the edge of the cliff. He fell, struck the steep grass slope, and began to roll. Over and over he went, gathering speed like a snowball, getting smaller and smaller, until he disappeared in the brush far below, a tiny spot of white.

No one can appreciate the feeling of relaxed relief that filled me. Hard and dangerous climbs, killing work, considerable hardship and discomfort had at length their reward. I could now take a rest. The day was young, and I contemplated with something like rapture a return to camp, and a good pottery day skinning that goat. In addition I was suffering from a splitting headache, the effects of incipient snow-blindness, and was generally pretty wobbly.

And then my eye wandered to the left, whence that goat had come. I saw a large splash of blood, at a spot before I had fired! It was too evident that the goat had already been wounded by Fisher, and therefore, by hunters' law, belonged to him.

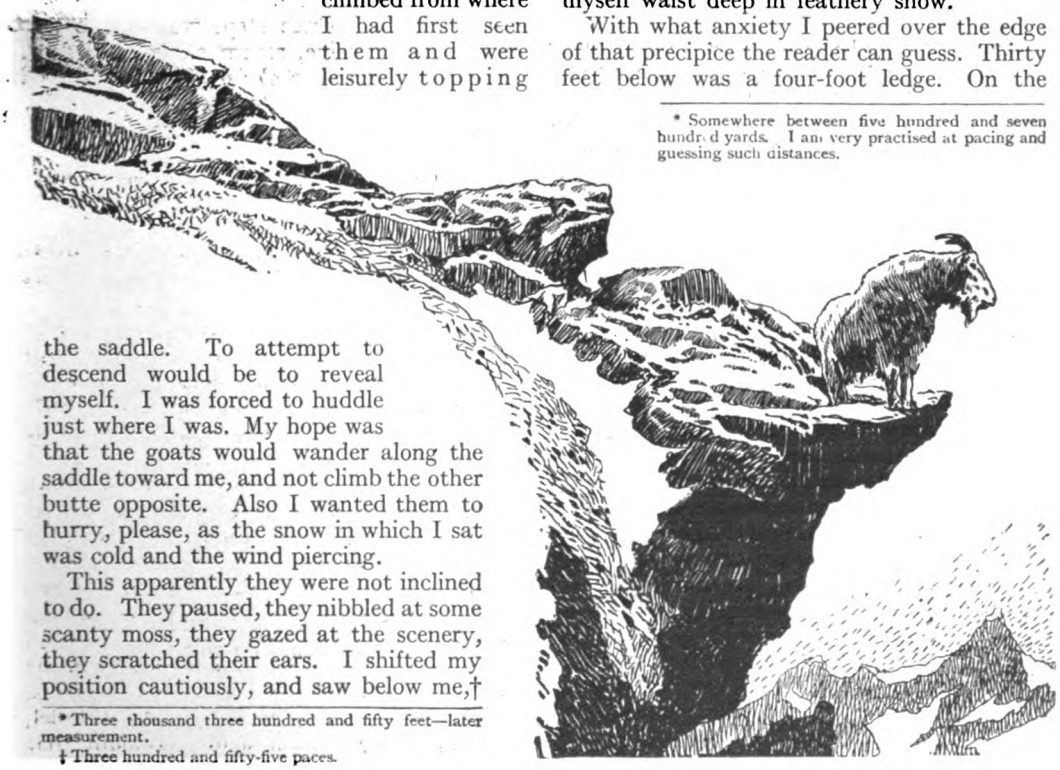
I set my teeth, and turned up the mountain to regain the descent we had just made. At the knife-edge top I stopped for a moment to get my breath and to survey the country. Diagonally across the basin where the wolves were howling, half-way down the ridge running at right angles to my own, I made out two goats. They were two miles away from me on an air-line. My course was devious. I must proceed along my ridge to the Citadel, keeping always out of sight, surmount that

fortress, descend to the second ridge, walk along the other side of it until I was above those goats, and then sneak down on them.

I accomplished the first two stages of my journey all right, though with considerably more difficulty in spots than I should have anticipated. The knife-edge was so sharp and the sides so treacherous that at times it was almost impossible to travel anywhere but right on top. This would not do. By a little planning, however, I managed to reach the central "keep" of the Citadel, a high, bleak, broken pile, flat on top, with snow in all the crevices, and small cliffs on all sides. From this advantage I could cautiously spy out the lie of the land.

Below me fifty feet dipped the second ridge, running nearly at right angles. It sloped abruptly to the wolf basin, but fell sheer on the other side to depths I could not at that time guess.* A very few scattered, stunted, and twisted trees huddled close down to the rock and snow. The saddle was about fifty feet in width, and perhaps five hundred yards in length. It ended in another craggy butte, very much like the Citadel.

My first glance determined that my original plan would not do. The goats had climbed from where I had first seen them and were leisurely topping the saddle. To attempt to descend would be to reveal myself. I was forced to huddle just where I was. My hope was that the goats would wander along the saddle toward me, and not climb the other butte opposite. Also I wanted them to hurry, please, as the snow in which I sat was cold and the wind piercing.



This apparently they were not inclined to do. They paused, they nibbled at some scanty moss, they gazed at the scenery, they scratched their ears. I shifted my position cautiously, and saw below me,† lying on the snow at the very edge of the cliff, a tremendous billy. He had been there all the time, and I had been looking over him.

At the crack of the Springfield he lurched forward and toppled slowly out of sight over the edge of the cliff. The two I had been stalking instantly disappeared. But on the very top of the butte opposite appeared another. It was a very long shot,* but I had to take chances, for I could not tell whether or not the one I had just shot was accessible or not. On a guess I held six inches over his back. The goat gave one leap forward into space. For twenty feet he fell spread-eagled and right side up as though flying. Then he began to turn and whirl. As far as my personal testimony could go, he is falling yet through that dizzy blue abyss.

"Good-bye, billy," said I, sadly. It looked then as though I had lost both.

I worked my way down the face of the Citadel, until I was just above the steep snow-fields. Here was a drop of six feet. If the snow was soft, all right. If it was frozen underneath, I should be very likely to toboggan off into space. I pried loose a small rock and dropped it, watching with great interest how it lit. It sank with a dull plunk. Therefore I made my leap, and found myself waist deep in feathery snow.

With what anxiety I peered over the edge of that precipice the reader can guess. Thirty feet below was a four-foot ledge. On the

* Somewhere between five hundred and seven hundred yards. I am very practised at pacing and guessing such distances.

* Three thousand three hundred and fifty feet—later measurement.

† Three hundred and fifty-five paces.

edge of that ledge grew two stunted pines about three feet in height—and only two. Against those pines my goat had lodged. In my exultation I straightened up and uttered a whoop. To my surprise it was answered from behind me. Frank had followed my trail. He had killed a nanny, and was carrying the head. Everybody had goats.

After a great deal of manœuvring we worked our way down to the ledge by means of a crevice and a ten-foot pole. Then we tied the goat to the little trees and set to work. I held Frank while he skinned, and then he held me while I skinned. It was very awkward. The tiny landscape almost directly beneath us was blue with the atmosphere of distance. A solitary raven discovered us, and began to circle and croak and flop.

"You'll get your meal later," we told him.

Far below us, like suspended leaves swirling in a wind, a dense flock of snow-birds fluttered.

We got on well enough until it became necessary to sever the backbone. Then, try as we would, we could not in the general awkwardness reach a joint with a knife. At last we had a bright idea. I held the head back while Frank shot the vertebræ in two with his rifle.

Then we loosed the cords that held the body. It fell six hundred feet, hit a ledge, bounded out, and so disappeared toward the hazy blue map below. The raven folded his wings and dropped like a plummet, with a strange rushing sound. We watched him until the increasing speed of his swoop turned us a little dizzy, and we drew back. When we looked a moment later he had disappeared into the distance, straight down.

Now we had to win our way out. The trophy we tied with a rope. I climbed up the pole, and along the crevice as far as the rope would let me, hauled up the trophy, jamming my feet and back against both sides of the "chimney." Frank then clambered past me, and so repeat.

But once in the saddle we found we could not return the way we had come. The drop-off into the feather snow settled that. A short reconnaissance made it very evident that we would have to go completely round the outside of the Citadel, at the level of the saddle, until we had gained the other ridge. This meant about three-quarters of a mile against the tremendous cliff.

We found a ledge and started. Our packs weighed about sixty pounds apiece, and we were forced to carry them rather high. The ledge proved to be from six to ten feet wide, with a gentle slope outwards. We could not afford the false steps, nor the little slips, nor the overbalancings so unimportant on level ground. Progress was slow and cautious. We could not but remember the heart-stopping drop of that goat after we had cut the rope, and the swoop of the raven. Especially at the corners did we hug close to the wall, for the wind there snatched at us eagerly.

The ledge held out bravely. It had to, for there was no possible way to get up or down from it. We rounded the shoulder of the pile. Below us now was another landscape into which to fall—the valley of the stream, with its forests and its high cliffs over the way. But already we could see our ridge. Another quarter of a mile would land us in safety.

Without warning the ledge pinched out. A narrow tongue of shale, on so steep a slope that it barely clung to the mountain, ran twenty feet to a precipice. A touch sent its surface rattling merrily down and into space. It was only about eight feet across, and then the ledge began again.

We eyed it. Three steps would take us across. Alternative, return along the ledge to attack the problem *ab initio*.

"That shale is going to start," said Frank. "If you stop, she'll sure carry you over the edge. But if you keep right on going—*fast*—I believe your weight will carry you through."

We readjusted our packs so they could not slip and overbalance us. We measured and remeasured with our eyes just where those steps would fall. We took a deep breath—and we *hustled*. Behind us the fine shale slid sullenly in a miniature avalanche that cascaded over the edge. Our weight had carried us through!

In camp we found that Harry's shooting had landed a kid, so that we had a goat apiece.

We rejoined the main camp next day just ahead of a big snow-storm that must have made travel all but impossible. Then for five days we rode out, in snow, sleet, and hail. But we were entirely happy, and indifferent to what the weather could do to us now.

FOR BELGIUM

By

J·J·BELL

Illustrated by

DUDLEY TENNANT

TOWARDS midnight the rain ceased, the air seemed to become suddenly colder. A thin fog gathered on the Belgian plain surrounding the village which, like so many others, had recently suffered a senseless bombardment. To the village now so silent came fitfully the dull booming of distant guns and the ceaseless murmur of a swollen river.

In one of the houses still habitable, though damaged as to its front apartments, a dark-haired young woman stood by the kitchen dresser, in the light of a couple of candles, and read, not for the first time, a letter which, apparently, had been folded originally into the smallest possible compass. She was a handsomely-built young woman, and her present pallor and patent anxiety scarcely detracted from the charms of her features. Her lips moved to the written words, as though she were learning them by heart, which, as a matter of fact, she had done hours ago. At last she refolded the letter, put it carefully in her bosom, and, shaking her head, murmured; "Long past the hour. He will not come now. He dare not. The good God grant that they have not captured him." She began to pace the floor, her head drooping, her fingers locked in front of her.

The kitchen was spacious but barely furnished. The Prussians in occupation of the village during the past three weeks had helped themselves—giving receipts, of course. A broad dresser with racks of dishes and a tall cupboard stood against one wall; a stove projected from the wall opposite, wherein was a door leading to the rest of the house. The door to the yard was placed between wide, squat windows draped with dark-coloured curtains, which, however, were undrawn. Under one window stood a table with a red cloth; under the other a sewing-machine of the sort that may be worked by hand or foot. A coarse rug lay in front of the stove, another in the midst of the flagged floor. There were cracks in the walls and window-panes.

The young woman did not pace the floor for long. With a start she stopped short, all on the alert. But her glance reached the nearer window a fraction of a second too late to detect a man's face being withdrawn. As she stood listening intently the door was cautiously opened. A young soldier, his

ragged dark blue uniform soaked and muddy, stepped in.

"Jules!" she exclaimed, in a whisper, half joyous, half fearful.

He glanced swiftly about him, closed the door as cautiously as he had opened it, laid down a bundle wrapped in sacking, and pocketed a revolver. With a rush he took the girl in his arms.

"Louise! Louise! After those long weeks——"

For a too brief space they exchanged sweet incoherencies. Then the girl gently put him from her.

"Jules, you must not waste a moment. When you did not come by eleven——"

"How long am I safe here?"

"Oh, there is no safety here for you. At any moment——"

"Your letter made me understand that the two Germans never came back before midnight. I am late, I know—almost too late. The way was difficult in the darkness. They seem to have doubled their sentries."

"It is near midnight now, Jules. See!" She pointed to the clock. "Suppose the Germans were to come in before their usual time!"

He kissed her and laughed reassuringly. "Five minutes will suffice, if you have done all that my letter asked."

"It is done, though I was puzzled——"

"No doubt." He laughed again. "Well"—briskly—"I'll get to work. Help me, Louise, first by bolting the door and drawing the curtains." He picked up the bundle and folded back the rug on the middle of the floor.

She took a step towards the door and halted, hesitating. "Jules, it is against the regulations to bolt doors and draw curtains. They have been very cruel to people for less."

"Their cruelty is near its end," he said, grimly, dropping to his knees and untying the bundle. "*Chérie*, do what I ask. One must take risks for Belgium."

Without further delay she obeyed the request. Thereafter she drew near and stood watching him. From the bundle he took several tools, also an oblong box with a grooved wheel at one end.

"What is that, Jules?" she inquired, in the low voice that seemed to have become habitual.

"An electric battery." He closely examined the dusty floor; then with one of the tools he prised up a flagstone. His face lightened. "All in order!" he remarked, and drew from the recess a short coil of thin, rubber-covered cable.

"What is it, Jules?"

"The wire we laid—Jacques and I—just before the Germans came."

"Oh, Jacques," she sighed, "my poor brother."

"He died for Belgium," said the young man, softly, "but his good work remains." He let the stone back into its place (a tiny groove had been cut in its edge for the passage of the cable) and proceeded to screw the ends of the wires to the battery. "Where is old Marie?" he asked, casually. "Upstairs, asleep?"

Louise did not answer at once. When she spoke, it was unsteadily. "Old Marie lies upstairs—dead. This morning, before it was light, she went outside for water. She was shot—in mistake for a spy, they said."

"The crazy devils! Yet the boy who carried our letters came through them safe. Poor old Marie! Well, she also shall be avenged." He replaced the edge of the rug over the recently-disturbed flag and rose. "Now for that happy thought of mine, the sewing-machine. Ah, Louise, how I puzzled my brains before I struck the idea!"

"I also have been puzzling," she said, with a faint smile. "Why——?"

"Soon you will understand. Come, help me once more."

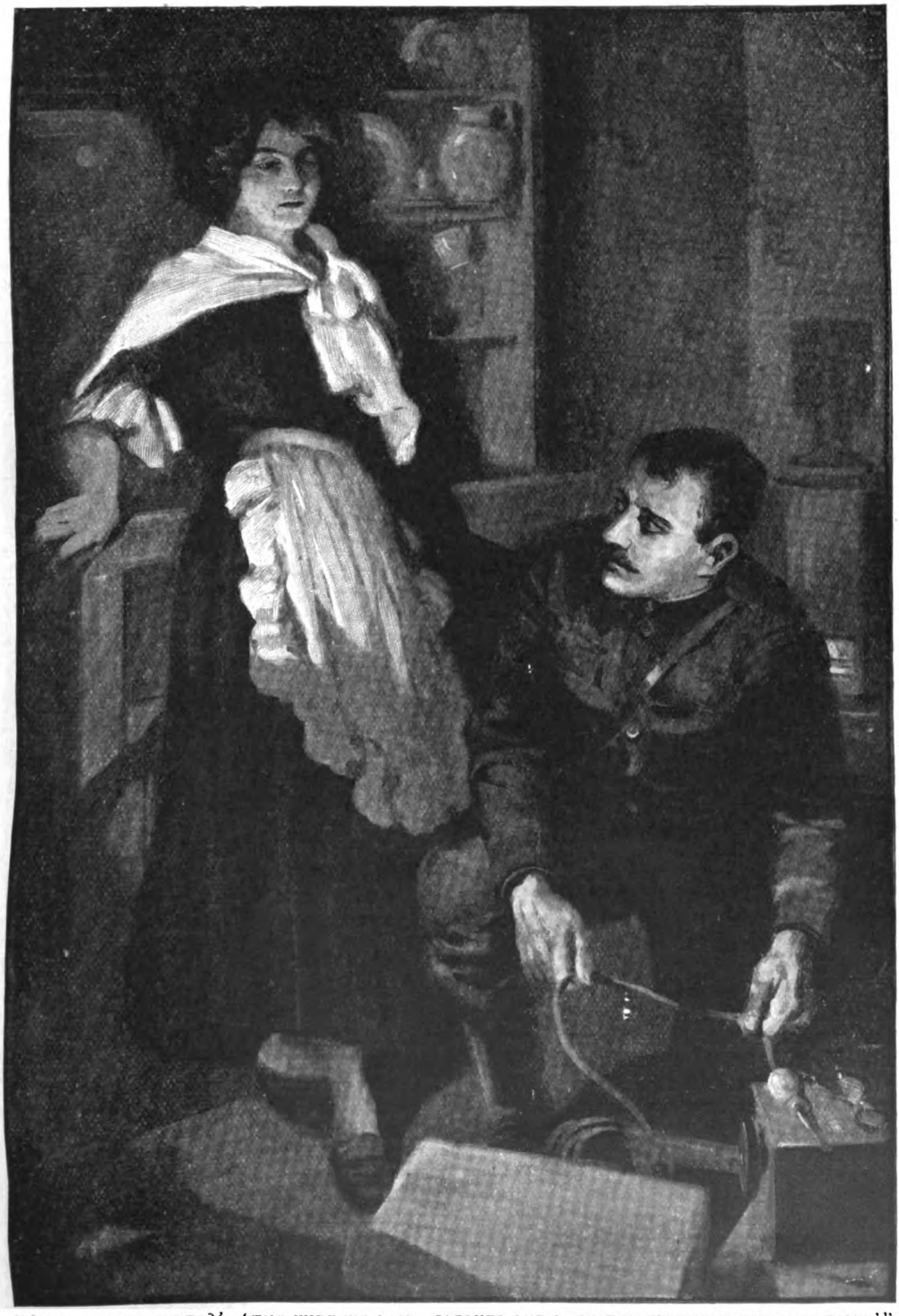
Between them they brought the machine to the rug, adjusting its position there to a nicety, and again he went down on his knees. The foot-gearing had been removed, the machine itself put in order for hand-work. Where the footplate had been Jules placed the battery, and made it fast and rigid with cord. Finally, and carefully, he fitted a thin round belting over the wheel of the machine and under that of the battery. Sinking back on his heels, he contemplated his performance with unfeigned satisfaction. "Louise," he said, "to-night, before I started, my captain embraced me, saying, 'Do this, Jules, and Belgium will remember your name.' But it shall be our names together, my girl!"

"But what does it——?" Louise began, and laid her fingers on the handle.

Like a shot he was up and snatched her away from the machine.

"*Dieu!*" he gasped. "Not yet! Too soon would ruin everything!" Next moment he kissed her reassuringly. "Dearest, you shall know all in a moment. Now to make our work look very, very innocent. A cloth—that on the table will do."

She brought it to him. Between them they hung it round the edges of the machine-stand and he fastened it lightly with a nail or two.



"'WHAT IS IT, JULES?' 'THE WIRE WE LAID—JACQUES AND I—JUST BEFORE THE GERMANS CAME.'"

He stood back, regarding the result admiringly. "Innocent indeed!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, but——" Breaking off, she ran over to the dresser, opened a drawer, and came back with a small heap of sewing, which she laid beside the machine. "A little more innocent, is it not, Jules?"

"Bravo! Allow a woman!" He got a chair and placed it in position for working the machine. "*Allons!* It is finished!" He picked up the sacking and tools and cast them into a press under the dresser.

At that moment fear returned upon the woman.

"Jules, you must go! The peril is too great."

He slipped his arm about her waist. "Yes, the time grows short. But before I go I must explain. Listen, *chérie.*" He threw his free arm in the direction of the nearer window. "Out yonder is the great bridge that was our misfortune three weeks ago." He made a gesture in the opposite direction. "Away yonder is our new hope—three thousand brave men, hiding, alert, waiting for a signal!"

"Oh, Jules, but what can three thousand do?"

"Much—if the Germans on this side of the river lose communication with their friends on the other side. They will be caught in a trap—men, guns, stores, and all. But there is more!" he went on, unable wholly to repress his excitement. "To-night—within the next hour—the Germans will bring over the bridge five great new guns to harass our English allies on the coast. Those guns must not reach this side—at least as German guns. *Now* you can guess!"

She clasped her hands. "Jules," she whispered, "the bridge is mined!"

"It is so. The mines ought to have been sprung three weeks ago, yet they will cost the Germans more dear to-night. Come and see." He led her close to the machine and lightly touched its handle. "A dozen quick turns—that is all." He paused, looking deep into her eyes. "Louise, I must go now and tell our friends that all is prepared. If—if I do not return in time—if anything happens to prevent my reaching this house—will you deal a blow for Belgium?" Again he touched the handle.

She clung to him. "I will do it—for you and Belgium. But, oh, love, you will come back to me!"

"Then we shall win! Your signal will be a single stroke on the church bell. Be ready. Act promptly. The good God sustain you!"

"And go with you, and bring you back to me!" she sobbed, in his embrace.

The clock began to strike.

"Midnight!" she cried, in a panic. "Fly, dearest!"

He tore himself from her. "Farewell, Louise, farewell." He ran to the door, opened it quietly, peered into the night—the door closed behind him.

Louise stood motionless, her hand to her heart. "Guard him—guard him!" she sighed.

Next moment she was hastily drawing back the curtains. That done, she seated herself in the chair by the machine, and bowed her head in her hands.

Not far away a rifle cracked—again—and yet again. She sprang up as if to make for the door, and relapsed.

Heavy footsteps approached the house. A voice unpleasantly familiar said: "Another of those stupid spies got more than he wanted. Well, gute nacht, gute nacht. Sleep well."

Louise sat up, found a needle with a thread in it, and made a feint of sewing.

Another voice replied, "Gute nacht, Blutner," and the sound of retreating footsteps followed. The door was flung open and Blutner, one of the two Prussian officers who had made their quarters in the house, entered. He was a good-looking young fellow, bright-eyed and fair, and, as would be seen presently, his uniform bore few traces of hard service. He slammed the door behind him and, without a glance at the figure by the machine, strode over to the stove.

"Curse the cold!" he muttered, removing his gloves and heavy coat, which he threw behind him on the table. There also he placed his helmet. He unfastened his sword-belt and hung it over the back of a chair, into which he dropped, placing his feet on another. He yawned, stretched his arms, and yawned again.

"Bring wine!" he suddenly commanded, in French.

Louise's head went up with a haughty jerk, and dropped back to sewing level.

After a pause—"Bring wine, I say!" The words were out before he turned his eyes to enforce them. He seemed somewhat taken aback. "I ask pardon, Fräulein. The servant—where is she?"

Louise rose. The faintness had passed. She would do her duty. "I will bring you wine," she said, in a restrained voice. "My servant is dead."

"*Himmel!* I had forgotten," he murmured, and got up quickly. "I will fetch the wine for myself. I know where it is kept."

She resumed her seat, and he crossed the floor to the tall cupboard, where he provided himself with a couple of bottles and a tumbler. Carrying these to the stove, he drew one of the corks with the screw in his knife. He filled the tumbler and seated himself, remarking pleasantly :—

" You remain up late to-night, Fräulein. You have work to do, I see." He drank as one thirsty.

" Yes," she said, without raising her eyes, " I have work to do. Your room is quite ready for you."

" I thank you. But you do not so often honour this room, Fräulein."

" The rain comes into my own room, and fuel is scarce. To-morrow I will seek a room in another house." She felt it necessary to talk, to hold his attention to herself.

" Not so, I beg of you," he said, politely. " My comrade and I leave this place to-morrow. I will see to it that no others shall be quartered upon you in future. This is your home. It shall be respected." He gazed at her admiringly, and raised the tumbler as if he would drink her health. However, she appeared to be intent on her seam, and with a shrug of his shoulder he tossed off the wine. Having refilled the tumbler, he continued : " Before I go to-morrow I will give you a receipt for all we may have consumed in this house. Germany is honest, and will pay for everything."

Now she faced him. Her voice came quiet but incisive. " Truly, M'sieu, Germany shall pay for much."

The significance of the words, or their tone, escaped him. " For everything," he repeated, easily. " When this war is over Germany will be rich enough to——"

Still quietly, she interrupted him. " My father, too feeble to fight, beaten to death by drunken soldiers ; my brother killed by a shell thrown on an undefended village ; my mother and little brother beggars in Holland ; my young sister—the good God knows where ; my *fiancé*—— I ask you, M'sieu, how shall Germany pay for these ? "

He made a gesture of impatience. " In war, Fräulein, there is bound to be suffering and sadness."

" There is nothing else." She raised her voice slightly. " Is it true that you German soldiers are taught to leave us nothing but our eyes to weep with ? "

" The words are those of one of our greatest men."

" Your Kaiser ? "

" *Nein !* But——"

" The man must have been greater than his soul. Nothing but eyes to weep with ! That is all your Kaiser and his war lords are going to leave—the German nation."

Blutner started, but quickly controlled himself. Haughtily he said : " Victory will dry all eyes in Germany."

" You dream of victory ? " She had gone back to her sewing.

" Already victory is assured. I give you a German's word for that ! "

Her voice was soft and cold as snow. " A German's word ! What may that be worth nowadays ? "

Stung, he exclaimed : " You go too far ! "

" Surely a Belgian has the right to ask the question."

" Were you a man——"

" One of us two would now be silent for ever. Nay," she proceeded, calmly, " I no longer fear anything. I am surfeited with the frightfulness of you Germans. You no longer impress me. When all is said and done, you can only kill and burn, murder and steal——"

" I order you to be silent."

Louise threaded a needle—or pretended to do so. " Oh, you are brave enough, you have your courage, I grant you. But you have also an unfortunate faculty for spattering your glories with shame and dis——"

" Not another word ! "

" On land, on sea, in the air, your gallant deeds are leavened with ignoble ones. If chivalry must pass for ever from the earth, Germany will have expelled it."

At that he sprang up, furious, dashing the bottle to the floor. " You mad-woman, must I silence you with my hands ? "

" There is more wine in the cupboard."

He strode to her side. " Are you not afraid ? " His hand fell and brutally gripped her shoulder.

She winced.

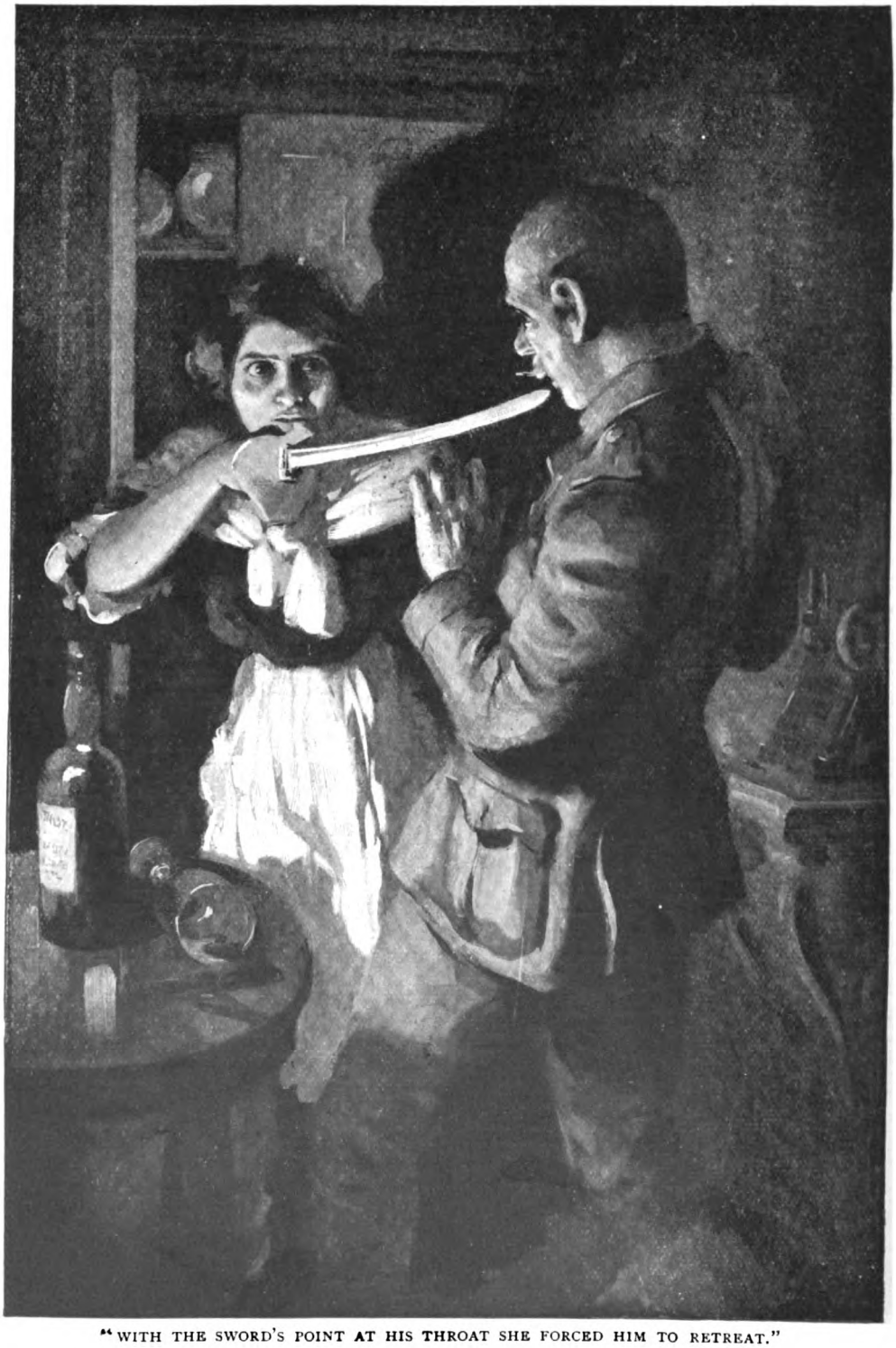
" So ? " he laughed.

" Yes," she said, with amazing calmness, " you can hurt, you can destroy—the flesh."

" Bah ! " He flung away from her and went back to the stove. Against its edge he cracked the neck of the second bottle. As he charged the tumbler he muttered : " There's time enough — time enough." Then, aloud : " You are a brave woman, Fräulein ; but it is a mistake to be brave as well as beautiful." He elevated the tumbler. " Fräulein, I will drink to our better acquaintance ! "

She was bending over her sewing.

" Behold ! " he cried. " To our better



"WITH THE SWORD'S POINT AT HIS THROAT SHE FORCED HIM TO RETREAT."

acquaintance, pretty one. So!" He laughed roughly. "She is proud and cold—proud and cold as a statue. Well, we shall see!" He drained the glass. "We shall see!"

Presently he rose, smiling, and proceeded leisurely to draw the curtains and bolt the door. Her eyes followed his actions, but she did not stir. Having refreshed himself once more, he strolled over to the machine and halted, looking down upon her, still smiling.

"Well?" he said, softly, mockingly.

She paid no attention.

"What do you think I was doing just now?"

"Breaking your own regulations."

"What one makes, one may break. Listen, Fräulein. I am going to tell you something. My comrade will not be here till morning. He is on special duty. Shall I tell you where?" He lit a cigarette, and continued: "He is on duty at the bridge, waiting for the passage of our splendid new guns. What are those splendid guns for? To put an end to your friends, the damned English, on the coast. Ach! I am very well aware that you poor, ignorant people here have hopes. But put them away. They are vain, crazy. You have not a fighting man left within ten miles." He leaned forward and gave her arm a playful little shake. "So! You still make believe you are not afraid? I know better, pretty one!"

"What is left me to be afraid of?" she said, wearily.

He leaned nearer. "Only—myself."

"Ah!" She recoiled as though stabbed; wilted as though her nerve, strung to the limit, had been severed.

"And yet," he said, soothingly, "I am not so terrible a fellow when I get my own way. You understand?—when I get my own way."

"Beast!" Springing up, she backed from him.

He followed without haste. "There is time enough. We have the house to ourselves until morning."

"Help! Oh, help!"

"Spare your pretty voice. Who in this place gives heed to a woman's cry in the night?"

"Jules!—if you still live——" she cried, desperately, her back to the dresser.

"My name is Carl." He strode forward to seize her.

Slipping under his arm, she darted across the room. Like a flash she whipped his sword from its scabbard and turned, panting, to face him just as he was upon her.

With the sword's point at his throat she forced him to retreat towards the door. Passing the window, she caught, with her left hand, the curtains and tore them down. The sword wavered, but not long enough for the man to escape. His eyes roved in search of something that might avail him. She drove him beyond the door. Then, with a quick movement, she drew back the bolt and pulled the door wide.

"Help! Jules!"

He saw his chance. He sprang sideways towards the sewing-machine; he snatched away the cloth that hung from the table, wrapped it round his hand and arm, leapt upon her, and wrested the sword from her tired hold. Breathing hard, inflamed with mingling passions, he flung the door shut, and approached her until his sweating face almost touched her white countenance. His voice was thick.

"What now, my pretty one?"

She fled to the dresser and leaned against it, on the verge of collapse. Her eyes saw nothing save the exposed secret.

Laughing, he passed to the stove, threw aside the red cloth, returned his sword to its scabbard, and took a gulp of wine. Presently, still laughing, he advanced towards her once more. About the centre of the floor he paused to bow mockingly and say: "It is time to surrender, is it not, my——"

Boom! From the night came a sweet and solemn lingering note.

Blutner's smile vanished, his body straightened to stiff attention. "What was that bell?" he exclaimed, involuntarily, and made for the door.

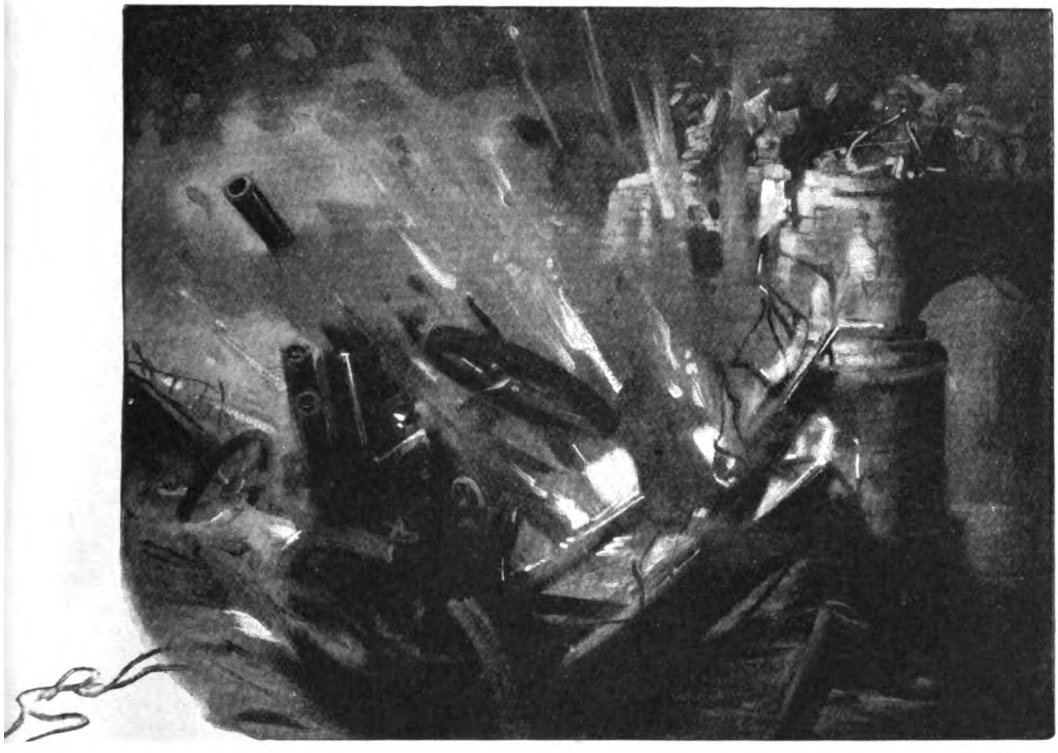
As he did so Louise darted forward. She was too prompt. A moment later he would have been peering out into the night. As it was, something about her movement warned him. He wheeled round, and realized part, if not all.

"*Gott in Himmel*, a mine!" he shouted, and grasped her as her fingers flew to the handle.

But she wriggled free, and with all her feverish might drove both her fists into his face. He staggered, blind for a moment, and in that moment the deed for Belgium was done.

Louise reeled from the machine, and as she came to rest against the door a great flare crossed the curtainless window and illuminated the interior. For the next two seconds Blutner stood like one in a trance. At the third a tremendous concussion rocked the building. Plaster fell, crockery rattled, the

"HE STAGGERED, BLIND FOR A MOMENT, AND IN THAT MOMENT THE DEED FOR BELGIUM WAS DONE."



door of the stove flew open, glass shivered and tinkled.

Blutner dashed at the girl. "What was it? Answer, or I kill you!"

She broke into hysterical laughter and disconnected words. "The bridge—your splendid guns—gone, lost—you also! *Vive la Belge! Vive l'Angle*——"

Beside himself, he struck her on the mouth.

She drew her hand across it and cried: "Kill me, German beast! I care not!"

Savagely he seized her. "Yes, you shall die—be shot—nay, hanged. But first—first you shall pay *me!*" Grinning in his frenzy, he began to drag her, struggling across the floor, in the direction of the inner door. "*Ja!* First you shall pay——"

Out of the night sprang a racket of machine-gun and rifle fire. A bugle sang wildly.

"*Gott!* It is an attack!" He hesitated, but only for an instant. "First you shall pay me—pay me, my pretty mad-woman! Come; it is useless——"

Running footsteps—the door burst open.

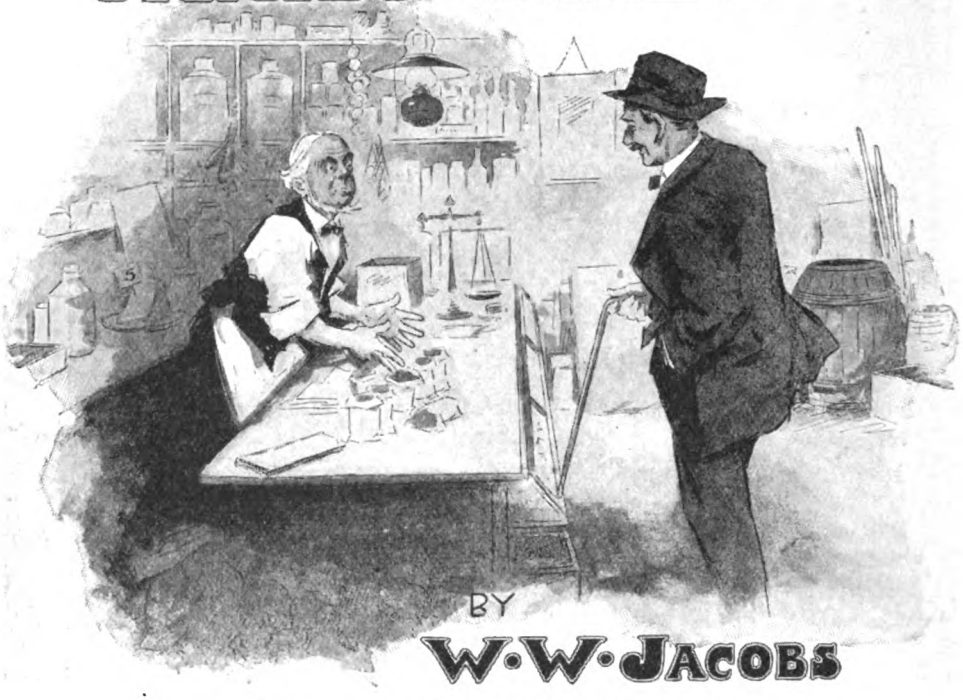
"Hands up, devil!"

Jules, his head bound in a bloody rag, stood there, revolver levelled.

Louise, breaking away, flew to the shelter of his left arm and hid her face on his muddy breast.

In a stiff, mechanical fashion, Blutner's arms went up. He looked as if he were going to cry.

FAMILY CARES



BY

W·W·JACOBS

Illustrated by Will Owen.

MR. JERNSHAW, who was taking the opportunity of a lull in business to weigh out pound packets of sugar, knocked his hands together and stood waiting for the order of the tall bronzed man who had just entered the shop—a well-built man of about forty—who was regarding him with blue eyes set in quizzical wrinkles.

"What, Harry!" exclaimed Mr. Jernshaw, in response to the wrinkles. "Harry Barrett!"

"That's me," said the other, extending his hand. "The rolling stone come home covered with moss."

Mr. Jernshaw, somewhat excited, shook hands, and led the way into the little parlour behind the shop.

"Fifteen years," said Mr. Barrett, sinking into a chair, "and the old place hasn't altered a bit."

"Smithson told me he had let that house in Webb Street to a Barrett," said the grocer, regarding him, "but I never thought of you. I suppose you've done well, then?"

Mr. Barrett nodded. "Can't grumble," he said, modestly. "I've got enough to live on. Melbourne's all right, but I thought I'd come home for the evening of my life."

"Evening!" repeated his friend.

"Forty-three," said Mr. Barrett, gravely. "I'm getting on."

"You haven't changed much," said the grocer, passing his hand through his spare grey whiskers. "Wait till you have a wife and seven youngsters. Why, boots alone——"

Mr. Barrett uttered a groan intended for sympathy. "Perhaps you could help me with the furnishing," he said, slowly. "I've never had a place of my own before, and I don't know much about it."

"Anything I can do," said his friend. "Better not get much yet; you might marry, and my taste mightn't be hers."

Mr. Barrett laughed. "I'm not marrying," he said, with conviction.

"Seen anything of Miss Prentice yet?" inquired Mr. Jernshaw.

"No," said the other, with a slight flush. "Why?"

"She's still single," said the grocer.

"What of it?" demanded Mr. Barrett, with warmth. "What of it?"

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"Nothing," said Mr. Jernshaw, slowly. "Nothing; only I——"

"Well?" said the other, as he paused.

"I—there was an idea that you went to Australia to—to better your condition," murmured the grocer. "That—that you were not in a position to marry—that——"

"Boy and girl nonsense," said Mr. Barrett, sharply. "Why, it's fifteen years ago. I don't suppose I should know her if I saw her. Is her mother alive?"

"Rather!" said Mr. Jernshaw, with emphasis. "Louisa is something like what her mother was when you went away."

Mr. Barrett shivered.

"But you'll see for yourself," continued the other. "You'll have to go and see them. They'll wonder you haven't been before."

"Let 'em wonder," said the embarrassed Mr. Barrett. "I shall go and see all my old friends in their turn; casual-like. You might let 'em hear that I've been to see you before seeing them, and then, if they're thinking any nonsense, it'll be a hint. I'm stopping in town while the house is being decorated; next time I come down I'll call and see somebody else."

"That'll be another hint," assented Mr. Jernshaw. "Not that hints are much good to Mrs. Prentice."

"We'll see," said Mr. Barrett.

In accordance with his plan his return to his native town was heralded by a few short visits at respectable intervals. A sort of human butterfly, he streaked rapidly across one or two streets, alighted for half an hour to resume an old friendship, and then disappeared again. Having given at least half-a-dozen hints of this kind, he made a final return to Ramsbury and entered into occupation of his new house.

"It does you credit, Jernshaw," he said, gratefully. "I should have made a rare mess of it without your help."

"It looks very nice," admitted his friend. "Too nice."

"That's all nonsense," said the owner, irritably.

"All right," said Mr. Jernshaw. "I don't know the sex, then, that's all. If you think that you're going to keep a nice house like this all to yourself, you're mistaken. It's a *home;* and where there's a home a woman comes in, somehow."

Mr. Barrett grunted his disbelief.

"I give you four days," said Mr. Jernshaw.

As a matter of fact, Mrs. Prentice and her daughter came on the fifth. Mr. Barrett, who was in an easy-chair, wooing slumber with a handkerchief over his head, heard their voices at the front door and the cordial invitation of his housekeeper. They entered the room as he sat hastily smoothing his rumpled hair.

"Good afternoon," he said, shaking hands.

Mrs. Prentice returned the greeting in a level voice and, accepting a chair, gazed around the room.

"Nice weather," said Mr. Barrett.

"Very," said Mrs. Prentice.

"It's—it's quite a pleasure to see you again," said Mr. Barrett.

"We thought we should have seen you before," said Mrs. Prentice, "but I told Louisa that no doubt you were busy, and wanted to surprise her. I like the carpet; don't you, Louisa?"

Miss Prentice said she did.

"The room is nice and airy," said Mrs. Prentice, "but it's a pity you didn't come to me before deciding. I could have told you of a better house for the same money."

"I'm very well satisfied with this," said Mr. Barrett. "It's all *I* want."

"It's well enough," conceded Mrs. Prentice, amiably. "And how have you been all these years?"

Mr. Barrett, with some haste, replied that his health and spirits had been excellent.

"You look well," said Mrs. Prentice. "Neither of you seem to have changed much," she added, looking from him to her daughter. "And I think you did quite well not to write. I think it was much the best."

Mr. Barrett sought for a question: a natural, artless question, that would neutralize the hideous suggestion conveyed by this remark, but it eluded him. He sat and gazed in growing fear at Mrs. Prentice.

"I—I couldn't write," he said at last, in desperation; "my wife——"

"Your *what?*" exclaimed Mrs. Prentice, loudly.

"Wife," said Mr. Barrett, suddenly calm now that he had taken the plunge. "She wouldn't have liked it."

Mrs. Prentice tried to control her voice. "I never heard you were married!" she gasped. "Why isn't she here?"

"We couldn't agree," said the veracious Mr. Barrett. "She was very difficult; so I left the children with her and——"

"Chil——" said Mrs. Prentice, and paused, unable to complete the word.

"Five," said Mr. Barrett, in tones of resignation. "It was rather a wrench, parting with them, especially the baby. He got his first tooth the day I left."

The information fell on deaf ears. Mrs. Prentice, for once in her life thoroughly at a loss, sat trying to collect her scattered faculties. She had come out prepared for a hard job, but not an impossible one. All things considered, she took her defeat with admirable composure.

"I have no doubt it is much the best thing for the children to remain with their mother," she said, rising.

"Much the best," agreed Mr. Barrett.

"Whatever she is like," continued the old lady. "Are you ready, Louisa?"

Mr. Barrett followed them to the door, and then, returning to the room, watched, with glad eyes, their progress up the street.

"Wonder whether she'll keep it to herself?" he muttered.

His doubts were set at rest next day. All Ramsbury knew by then of his matrimonial complications, and seemed anxious to talk about them; complications which tended to increase until Mr. Barrett wrote out a list of his children's names and ages and learnt it off by heart.

Relieved of the attentions of the Prentice family, he walked the streets a free man; and it was counted to him for righteousness that he never said a hard word about his wife. She had her faults, he said, but they were many thousand miles away, and he preferred to forget them. And he added, with some truth, that he owed her a good deal.

For a few months he had no reason to alter his opinion. Thanks to his presence of mind, he walked the streets a free man and the Prentice family had no terrors for him. Heart-whole and fancy free, he led the easy life of a man of leisure, a condition of things suddenly upset by the arrival of Miss Grace Lindsay to take up a post at the elementary school. Mr. Barrett succumbed almost at once, and, after a few encounters in the street and meetings at mutual friends', went to unbosom himself to Mr. Jernshaw.

"What has she got to do with you?" demanded that gentleman.

"I—I'm rather struck with her," said Mr. Barrett.

"Struck with her?" repeated his friend, sharply. "I'm surprised at you. You've no business to think of such things."

"Why not?" demanded Mr. Barrett, in tones that were sharper still.

"Why not?" repeated the other. "Have you forgotten your wife and children?"

Mr. Barrett, who, to do him justice, *had* forgotten, fell back in his chair and sat gazing at him, open-mouthed.

"You're in a false position—in a way," said Mr. Jernshaw, sternly.

"False is no name for it," said Mr. Barrett, huskily. "What am I to do?"

"*Do?*" repeated the other, staring at him. "Nothing! Unless, perhaps, you send for your wife and children. I suppose, in any case, you would have to have the little ones if anything happened to her?"

Mr. Barrett grinned ruefully.

"Think it over," said Mr. Jernshaw.

"I will," said the other, heartily.

He walked home deep in thought. He was a kindly man, and he spent some time thinking out the easiest death for Mrs. Barrett. He decided at last upon heart-disease, and a fortnight later all Ramsbury knew of the letter from Australia conveying the mournful intelligence. It was generally agreed that the mourning and the general behaviour of the widower left nothing to be desired.

"She's at peace at last," he said, solemnly, to Jernshaw.

"I believe you killed her," said his friend.

Mr. Barrett started violently.

"I mean your leaving broke her heart," explained the other.

Mr. Barrett breathed easily again.

"It's your duty to look after the children," said Jernshaw, firmly. "And I'm not the only one that thinks so."

"They are with their grandfather and grandmother," said Mr. Barrett.

Mr. Jernshaw sniffed.

"And four uncles and five aunts," added Mr. Barrett, triumphantly.

"Think how they would brighten up your house," said Mr. Jernshaw.

His friend shook his head. "It wouldn't be fair to their grandmother," he said, decidedly. "Besides, Australia wants population."

He found to his annoyance that Mr. Jernshaw's statement that he was not alone in his views was correct. Public opinion seemed to expect the arrival of the children, and one citizen even went so far as to recommend a girl he knew, as nurse.

Ramsbury understood at last that his decision was final, and, observing his attentions to the new schoolmistress, flattered itself that it had discovered the reason. It is possible that Miss Lindsay shared their views, but if so she made no sign, and on the many occasions on which she met Mr. Barrett on her way to and from school greeted him with frank cordiality. Even when he referred to his loneliness, which he did frequently, she made no comment.

"IT WAS GENERALLY AGREED THAT THE MOURNING AND THE GENERAL BEHAVIOUR OF THE WIDOWER LEFT NOTHING TO BE DESIRED."

He went into half-mourning at the end of two months, and a month later bore no outward signs of his loss. Added to that his step was springy and his manner youthful. Miss Lindsay was twenty-eight, and he persuaded himself that, sexes considered, there was no disparity worth mentioning.

He was only restrained from proposing by a question of etiquette. Even a shilling book on the science failed to state the interval that should elapse between the death of one wife and the negotiations for another. It preferred instead to give minute instructions with regard to the eating of asparagus. In this dilemma he consulted Jernshaw.

"Don't know, I'm sure," said that gentleman; "besides, it doesn't matter."

"Doesn't matter?" repeated Mr. Barrett. "Why not?"

"Because I think Tillett is paying her attentions," was the reply. "He's ten years younger than you are, and a bachelor. A girl would naturally prefer him to a middle-aged widower with five children."

"In Australia," the other reminded him.

"Man for man, bachelor for bachelor," said Mr. Jernshaw, regarding him, "she might prefer you; as things are——"

"I shall ask her," said Mr. Barrett, doggedly. "I was going to wait a bit longer, but if there's any chance of her wrecking her prospects for life by marrying that tailor's dummy it's my duty to risk it—for her sake. I've seen him talking to her twice myself, but I never thought he'd dream of such a thing."

Apprehension and indignation kept him awake half the night, but when he arose next morning it was with the firm resolve to put his fortune to the test that day. At four o'clock he changed his neck-tie for the third time, and at ten past sallied out in the direction of the school. He met Miss Lindsay just coming out, and, after a well-deserved compliment to the weather, turned and walked with her.

"I was hoping to meet you," he said, slowly.

"Yes?" said the girl.

"I—I have been feeling rather lonely to-day," he continued.

"You often do," said Miss Lindsay, guardedly.

"It gets worse and worse," said Mr. Barrett, sadly.

"I think I know what is the matter with you," said the girl, in a soft voice; "you have got nothing to do all day, and you live alone, except for your housekeeper.'

Mr. Barrett assented with some eagerness, and stole a hopeful glance at her.

"You—you miss something," continued Miss Lindsay, in a faltering voice.

"I do," said Mr. Barrett, with ardour.

"You miss"—the girl made an effort—

" you miss the footsteps and voices of your little children."

Mr. Barrett stopped suddenly in the street, and then, with a jerk, went blindly on.

" I've never spoken of it before because it's your business, not mine," continued the girl. " I wouldn't have spoken now, but when you referred to your loneliness I thought perhaps you didn't realize the cause of it."

Mr. Barrett walked on in silent misery.

" Poor little motherless things!" said Miss Lindsay, softly. " Motherless and—fatherless."

" Better for them," said Mr. Barrett, finding his voice at last.

" It almost looks like it," said Miss Lindsay, with a sigh.

Mr. Barrett tried to think clearly, but the circumstances were hardly favourable. " Suppose," he said, speaking very slowly, " suppose I wanted to get married ? "

Miss Lindsay started. " What, again ? " she said, with an air of surprise.

" How could I ask a girl to come and take over five children ? "

" No woman that was worth having would let little children be sacrificed for her sake," said Miss Lindsay, decidedly.

" Do you think anybody would marry me with five children ? " demanded Mr. Barrett.

" She might," said the girl, edging away from him a little. " It depends on the woman."

" Would—you, for instance ? " said Mr. Barrett, desperately.

Miss Lindsay shrank still farther away. " I don't know; it would depend upon circumstances," she murmured.

" I will write and send for them," said Mr. Barrett, significantly.

Miss Lindsay made no reply. They had arrived at her gate by this time, and, with a hurried handshake, she disappeared indoors. Mr. Barrett, somewhat troubled in mind, went home to tea.

He resolved, after a little natural hesitation, to drown the children, and reproached himself bitterly for not having disposed of them at the same time as their mother. Now he would have to go through another period of mourning and the consequent delay in pressing his suit. Moreover, he would have to allow a decent interval between his conversation with Miss Lindsay and their untimely end.

The news of the catastrophe arrived two or three days before the return of the girl from her summer holidays. She learnt it in the first half-hour from her landlady, and sat in a dazed condition listening to a description of the grief-stricken father and the sympathy extended to him by his fellow-citizens. It appeared that nothing had passed his lips for two days.

" Shocking ! " said Miss Lindsay, briefly. " Shocking ! "

An instinctive feeling that the right and proper thing to do was to nurse his grief in solitude kept Mr. Barrett out of her way for nearly a week. When she did meet him she received a limp handshake and a greeting in a voice from which all hope seemed to have departed.

" I am very sorry," she said, with a sort of measured gentleness.

Mr. Barrett, in his hushed voice, thanked her.

" I am all alone now," he said, pathetically. " There is nobody now to care whether I live or die."

Miss Lindsay did not contradict him.

" How did it happen ? " she inquired, after they had gone some distance in silence.

" They were out in a sailing-boat," said Mr. Barrett; " the boat capsized in a puff of wind, and they were all drowned."

" Who was in charge of them ? " inquired the girl, after a decent interval.

" Boatman," replied the other.

" How did you hear ? "

" I had a letter from one of my sisters-in-law, Charlotte," said Mr. Barrett. " A most affecting letter. Poor Charlotte was like a second mother to them. She'll never be the same woman again. Never ! "

" I should like to see the letter," said Miss Lindsay, musingly.

Mr. Barrett suppressed a start. " I should like to show it to you," he said, " but I m afraid I have destroyed it. It made me shudder every time I looked at it."

" It's a pity," said the girl, dryly. " I should have liked to see it. I've got my own idea about the matter. Are you sure she was very fond of them ? "

" She lived only for them," said Mr. Barrett, in a rapt voice.

" Exactly. I don't believe they are drowned at all," said Miss Lindsay, suddenly. " I believe you have had all this terrible anguish for nothing. It's too cruel."

Mr. Barrett stared at her in anxious amazement.

" I see it all now," continued the girl. " Their Aunt Charlotte was devoted to them. She always had the fear that some day you would return and claim them, and to prevent that she invented the story of their death."

" Charlotte is the most truthful woman that ever breathed," said the distressed Mr. Barrett.

Miss Lindsay shook her head. " You are

like all other honourable, truthful people," she said, looking at him gravely. "You can't imagine anybody else telling a falsehood. I don't believe you could tell one if you tried."

Mr. Barrett gazed about him with the despairing look of a drowning mariner.

"I'm certain I'm right," continued the girl. "I can see Charlotte exulting in her wickedness. *Why!*"

"What's the matter?" inquired Mr. Barrett, greatly worried.

"I've just thought of it," said Miss Lindsay. "She's told you that your children are drowned, and she has probably told them you are dead. A woman like that would stick at nothing to gain her ends."

"You don't know Charlotte," said Mr. Barrett, feebly.

"I think I do," was the reply. "However, we'll make sure. I suppose you've got friends in Melbourne?"

"A few," said Mr. Barrett, guardedly.

"Come down to the post-office and cable to one of them."

Mr. Barrett hesitated. "I'll write," he said, slowly. "It's an awkward thing to cable; and there's no hurry. I'll write to Jack Adams, I think."

"It's no good writing," said Miss Lindsay, firmly. "You ought to know that."

"'SHOCKING!' SAID MISS LINDSAY, BRIEFLY. 'SHOCKING!'"

"Why not?" demanded the other.

"Because, you foolish man," said the girl, calmly, "before your letter got there, there would be one from Melbourne saying that he had been choked by a fish-bone, or died of measles, or something of that sort."

Mr. Barrett, hardly able to believe his ears, stopped short and looked at her. The girl's eyes were moist with mirth and her lips trembling. He put out his hand and took her wrist in a strong grip.

"That's all right," he said, with a great gasp of relief. "*Phew!* At one time I thought I had lost you."

"By heart-disease, or drowning?" inquired Miss Lindsay, softly.

The Value of Observation in War.

A LECTURE ADDRESSED TO ALL SCOUTS IN TRAINING.

By FREDK. G. COOKE,
Assoc. M. Inst. C.E., M.S.A. (Eastbourne Volunteer Training Corps).

This lecture, delivered by the Author to meetings of soldiers, will be found of the greatest interest, not only to those for whom it is primarily intended, but to all classes of readers to whom the habit of close observation is of value.

Photographs by G. & R. Lavis, Eastbourne.

YOU soldiers are soon to enjoy the very finest sport in the world — Man-hunting. You are about to fight men armed, equipped, and disciplined like yourselves, both on equal terms so far, and they are just as ready to shoot you as you are to shoot them. It is not enough, therefore, for a soldier to be simply a good shot; he should be as wary as a hawk, and as watchful. His first great duty is to emulate the hawk, which kills at large and is very seldom killed; that is, to slay and not be slain. How can he best accomplish this? Surely only by becoming a trained scout and brilliant observer now, at home.

Doubtless some of you are thinking: "This man isn't a regular soldier; what does he know about it?" Well, as a Civil Engineer, I am almost a soldier. I am an old Volunteer and have been a devoted wild-fowler and sportsman generally for over forty years. I have shot, fished, and sketched all over Europe, from the Tweed to Moscow, and in Canada. I have stalked big and little game, in great forests and lonely marshes, at all hours of the day and night; and so I claim by profession and hobbies to be somewhat of a trained observer, especially at night. Further, I have long been a student of military history.

Let me begin by telling you how a trained observer once saved three hundred men. During the Napoleonic Wars, a French soldier was convalescing in a small town, on the banks of a wide river, near Leipzig. He got to know of a shallow ford in the river, and carefully noted its position. Many months after he had rejoined the French forces his regiment fought a disastrous rearguard action in this very locality. The only available bridge was blown up, and so death or surrender stared the remnants of his regiment in the face; he remembered the ford, told his captain, led some three hundred men to the place, and they all escaped. This will show you what one observant man can do.

During the Soudan War a sporting British officer noticed that sand grouse came to drink every evening at a certain place, always about the same time, and from the same direction. One night they failed to come. He wondered why, thought it out, doubled his pickets, extended some especially in the direction the birds usually came from, and the result was that a rush of dervishes was detected and foiled. Another instance of what one observant man can do.

There is a little child's book entitled "Eyes and No Eyes"—a phrase which sums up the whole situation beautifully. The best soldier is the one who sees everything around him and remembers what he sees—one who is not simply a shooting-machine; he must have initiative, that is, be instantly ready for correct action in all circumstances, by day or night. He must be always making mental notes of his surroundings, far and near, and never forgetting them.

Brain beats mere brawn in this war.

Many of you are town-bred, unaccustomed to country life; yet, because your powers of observation in other matters are acute, you may quickly become trained observers and clever scouts if you will only apply those powers to your physical surroundings at

home, now, with patient and enduring energy. From my own observation in Germany, I believe the average German is no sportsman —far from it; he is a well-drilled machine. That is why the British soldier beats him hollow in a fair field.

As a race we, on the other hand, are essentially fond of field sports, therefore more or less full of observation and initiative; and it is these two great powers which I seek to foster. It is easy enough; you have only to begin, and stick to it like grim death.

How to Become a Trained Observer and Clever Scout.

First of all keep your eyes skinned; notice everything, everywhere; largely so that you may know your surroundings by night.

On the march, for instance, now, in England, get the lie of the land wherever you go; notice all special features: houses, churches, towers, farm buildings, bridges, rivers, streams, ponds, bogs, swamps, hills, valleys, gates, detached trees, woods, stacks, telegraph-poles, and all features which will enable you to know that road and district again, especially by night, for much fighting is done in the dark. You may notice that public-houses are omitted—just as well.

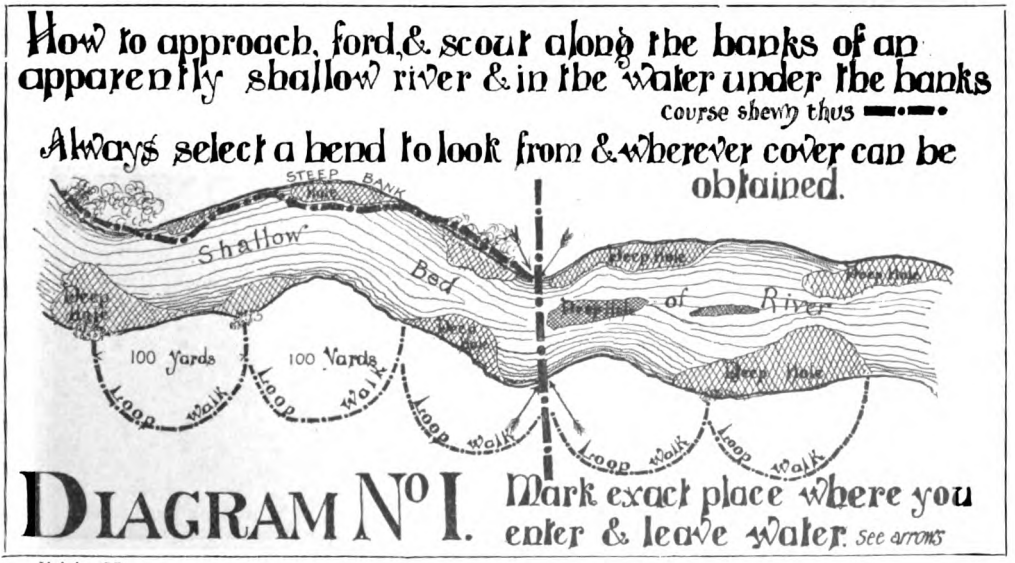
Now begin, in your leisure, by going into a field, a small varied one to begin with. Look at it hard, and notice everything, just for five minutes, and drill into your brain its main features: the nearest road, the gates, the fences, the grips, the ditches, the crops, the humps in it. Imagine there is a sharp-shooter there—where is he hiding, or where could you hide? Note the depth of the ditches, and all special features; then turn your back on it, and remember all you saw, and presently look again, and see what you have forgotten, and go over it all again. Always think you are on active service. Imagine that that field may contain a machine-gun, trenches, "dug-outs," even a hidden battery; it will quicken your interest.

Now go into a much larger field, and do the same thing all over again; look at it well, as though you loved it; then walk it over and think if you could find your way about it at night without losing your way.

Then begin to extend your range till you include quite a large district (*see* Illustration No. 5) and repeat the same process. Notice if the subsoil is chalk, clay, rock, or sand. Examine rabbit-burrows and edges of ditches for this purpose. Frequent ponds, full of water, point to clay. The grass will sometimes tell you something; chalk grass is very short, clay grass is rank and coarse, sand grass medium. Practice will soon make you expert. Small hills in clay districts are sometimes rock, sand, or chalk. It is of great importance to observe accurately, because of trench-digging. The difference between a wet or a dry site for trenches is naturally a very serious matter. Spend a night in a wet "dug-out," and then you will know, and possibly deserve it.

Observing Nature of Rivers and Streams, and How to Ford Them by Day or Night, Flooded or Clear.

If there are ditches, streams, or rivers note the depth of the water, as far as you can, the



How to cross an apparently shallow river in flood or in the dark (or a bog) by the aid of a long stick.

DIAGRAM Nº 2 Section shewing bed of rocky river

Scout rapidly crossing rough bed of river able to safely look around.
"Ridiculously obvious you may say. Yes but you will be obviously ridiculous when you urgently need what you have not got & cannot get & perhaps the lives of your comrades are at stake

width of the water, and the nature of the bottom, if mud, or otherwise. Smooth water indicates depth; running water shallows, but with holes at intervals sometimes. This great war may be said to be a war of rivers: the Marne, the Aisne, and the Vistula, for instance.

The nature and positions of all bridges should be noted; also locks and lock-gates, and, of course, all fords.

The flooding of part of Belgium (an act which defeated the German plans) could have only been done so skilfully by men who knew the country intimately. Here, again, a wise initiative (probably on the part of one or two local men) had an enormous effect on the campaign. But for that, the Germans might have been at Calais to-day.

Wherever there is a ditch, stream, or river, note its narrowest points most easy of crossing. A fly-fisherman always does this instinctively; he will tell by the run of water where there is a bank near the surface, by means of which he can wade across. The weeds on and under the surface, or the absence of weeds, will give him a clue as to the depth of the water and the nature of the bed of the river. To him a river is like an open book. So it ought to be to you.

Note if the water is its normal colour. If running unduly muddy, this points to operations above; possibly bridge-building, or damming. Always look for the highest flood-level. The bushes on the banks, and marks beyond the banks, will show this clearly, and the information may be of great value. A sudden flood of unexpected height may break down temporary bridges or render trenches useless. The French suffered very heavy losses on one occasion on the Aisne owing to the destruction of temporary bridges by a great flood. Possibly this was due to want of accurate observation.

A wild-fowler, when in search of sport, never walks heedlessly along the top of a river bank, or any high ground, not even at dusk. He stalks carefully every length, keeping studiously out of sight; always selects a bend as a good place to see from (*see* Illustration No. 1); never does anything in a hurry; approaches the bank at right angles by a series of loop walks, at intervals of a hundred yards, so as far as possible to disturb only a short length of water, then very cautiously looks over the bank—certainly not with the Service cap on—first selecting a place where there is a bush, long grass, or reeds to screen his face; listens and ponders as to the meaning of every sound; ever has one eye on the horizon, and always looks where he can hide. If he wants to rest, he doesn't sit where he can be seen a mile off, on the top of a gate for instance.

Illustration No. 2 shows the bed of a river. Now, just to prove that I know something about rivers, I find that I have, while fly-fishing, waded at least two hundred and forty miles in twenty different rivers, all over Europe from the Itchen to the Arno, including the Pegnitz, near Nuremberg.

Now I will tell you the proper way to attempt to cross an *apparently* shallow river, a bog or swamp, a flooded trench, or any wide water. Look at this five-foot landing-net handle; it has saved me many a perilous swim. Of course any stick of about the same length will serve equally well. You use it in discoloured water, or in the dark as a blind man uses a stick. You *feel your way and so can look around all the*

time with confidence, rifle in hand—a tremendous advantage. Further, you can slip across quickly—without a stick you can only painfully and slowly cross with your eyes at your feet, a pretty soldier indeed. (*See* Illustrations Nos. 3 and 4.) A river is always varying. Never trust a river; never ford or scout along a strange one without a five-foot stick. You may have to do it at night; what then? Cut one as you go along, and carefully sharpen the end.

"Ridiculously obvious!" you may say. Yes, but you may be obviously ridiculous when you urgently need what you haven't got, and cannot get, when perhaps the lives be deadly, especially without a stick, as I know full well. Further, the water will be muddy instead of clear, and you can't tell the depth or the nature of the bottom.

If you are upset with a rifle and a hundred rounds on you, what chance have you of swimming? A dead soldier, or one without a rifle, isn't much good.

If you step into a foot or two of mud, don't get flustered and plunge about; keep steady, and lift one foot after the other, very slowly, treading backwards. Don't twist your feet, lift them exactly as you put them down. Put a key into a lock and turn it, you can't then withdraw it; think of a key in a lock

3.—SOLDIER IN KHAKI SIGNALLING HIS POSITION WITH SHINY RIFLE AND FLAT CAP, PAINFULLY AND SLOWLY CROSSING A DANGEROUS SWAMP, WITH EYES ON THE GROUND.

4.—SCOUT SAFELY AND RAPIDLY CROSSING DANGEROUS SWAMP BY AID OF ROUGH STICK—SERVICE CAP COVERED, COAT MOTTLED, RIFLE DULLED, AND FACE AND HANDS STAINED.

of your comrades are in your hands. (*See* Illustrations Nos. 2, 3, and 4.)

Now, having safely crossed your river, you would be as mad as a hatter if you didn't mark on the bank exactly where you reached it, so that you can find that place again, even in the dark. A line of twigs or stones on the turf pointing to the exact spot is a good plan (see arrows on Illustration No. 1); further, you will carefully hide up that stick where you can find it on your return.

Remember that a river has moods. In the morning it may be clear; in the afternoon in flood, owing to rain possibly twenty miles away. A rise of even six inches may make it impassable; you may stagger through two feet of rough torrent; six inches more may when you sink deep into thick mud. I am indebted to Mr. R. B. Marston, editor *Fishing Gazette*, for this valuable advice. I have had very bad times myself in mud, on the banks of the Itchen, when wading; also when scouting.

At a pinch, fix your bayonet, and use your rifle and bayonet as a stick. Better a wet rifle than a dangerous ducking. I hope that I have said enough to prove that river-fording and scouting is very awkward business sometimes. Many a man has flung away his life by blundering heedlessly along unknown water; it is equivalent to playing blind-man's-buff on the edge of a cliff.

A Wild-Fowler is a Trained Scout.

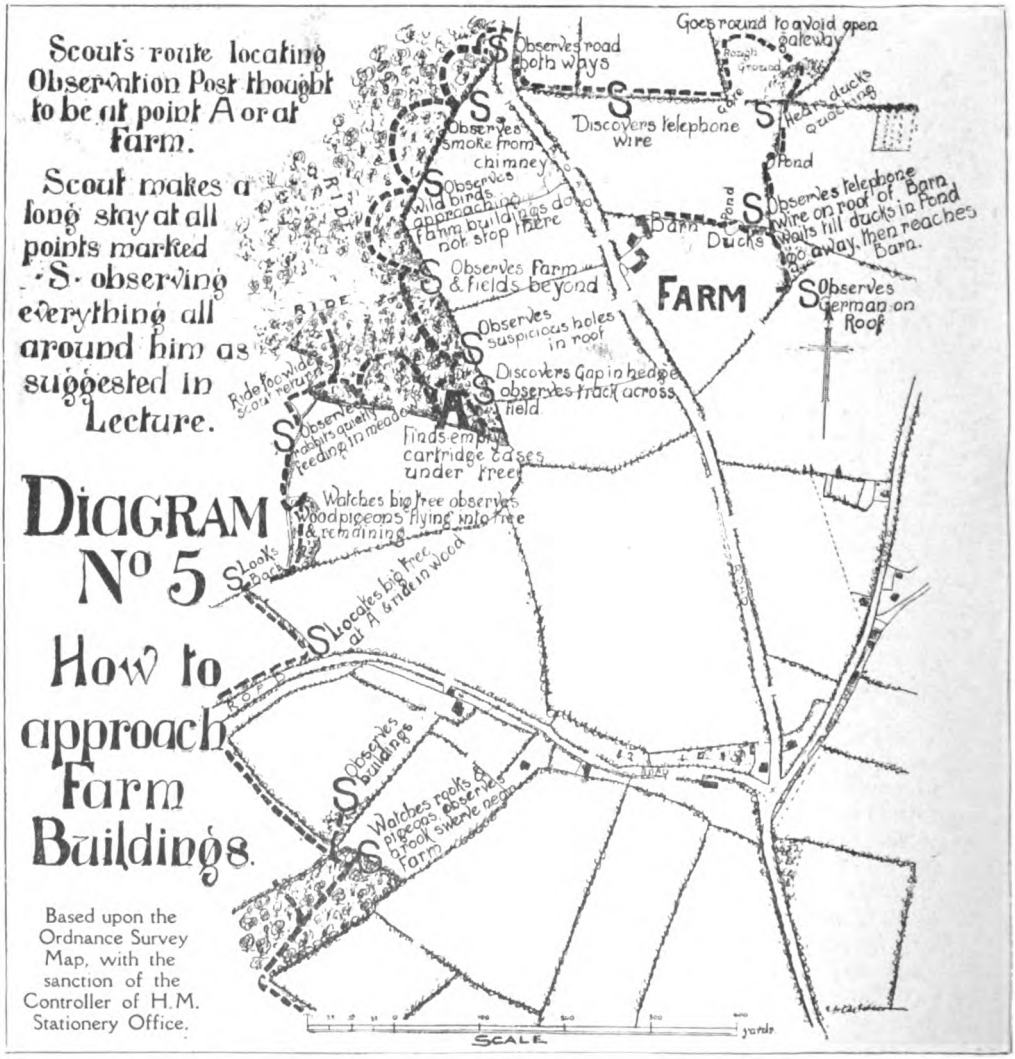
An expert wild-fowler is, of necessity, a

trained scout. His object is to see, without being seen, wild-fowl flying or at rest. He would spot an aeroplane the moment it hove in sight, just as he spots wild-duck on the horizon miles away. He takes no risks ; he will wait prone on the ground ever so long, patiently, till he can see where the birds are going to. He locates them with extreme care. He notes everything ; just as a soldier should when there are Germans about.

A wild-fowler seldom loses his way, even in a strange country. It is very serious when a soldier in active service gets lost. Let me illustrate this. In the Peninsular War, Lord Wellington on one occasion manœuvred Marshal Soult's army into a very perilous position. In an hour or so it would have been destroyed. Most unfortunately, at the critical moment, two drunken British soldiers, who had lost their way, were captured. They were hurriedly examined by Soult himself, who saw his danger, and just slipped away in time. Drunkenness and ignorance of their position, on the part of two British soldiers, deprived Wellington of a great victory. Next time you see a soldier recovering from drunkenness, tell him that story ; it may keep him sober for life. A soldier who is a hard drinker can never be a first-rate scout. Drunkenness is degrading enough in peace ; it is a crime in war, a deadly sin against King and Country.

How to Approach Farm Buildings. (*See* Illustration No. 5.)

Practise going out to a fixed point (say farm buildings, or a hill half a mile away) by



following along hedgerows, fences, banks, or rough ground so that no one can see you; imagine that a keen aeroplane scout is searching for you. Map out your course with thoughtful precision, watching and noting everything as you go along, both in front and behind, above and below.

Remember that bullocks will infallibly follow a crawling man, and even surround him (as I know only too well when stalking wild fowl). This cuts both ways, so always watch the behaviour of cattle; even note which way they are looking, if they are quietly feeding, or restless.

It is the little things that count when you are scouting. Don't chatter if there are two of you. Silence is golden. Extra care in passing a gap, or a hedge, may mean much—so may failure, or otherwise, to take advantage of a slight roughness in the ground, when passing over open spaces. Here extreme caution and preliminary study are necessary; go slow, and, in going, look for signs of men's tracks, especially in muddy places, along ditches, in gateways, and through gaps in hedges, across plank-bridges, near farm buildings—in short, everywhere. Look back frequently. Doing this prevents your being successfully followed; further, it helps you very materially to know your way back, especially in the dark. Note all newly-made gaps and disturbances in hedges, rushes, thick vegetation, or crops; these may give you a clue to the existence of a sniper's haunt.

Farm buildings, barns, sheds, cowhouses, hay, straw, and wood-stacks, and the like should be watched very cautiously—even for a prolonged period sometimes—before being approached, and should be circuited, where possible, with a view to discovering fresh tracks leading to and fro, or a telephone-wire leading to a German observation-post.

As far as possible avoid approaching within view of window or door openings, especially in lofts, or suspicious holes in walls and roofs. Watch carefully the behaviour of all live-stock or wild birds, particularly starlings; the absence of wild birds in the case of a large range of farm buildings points to the presence of human beings, perhaps on the roof.

6.—"WERE I A SCOUT AT THE FRONT I WOULD MOTTLE MY UNIFORM AND CAP WITH LEOPARD-LIKE SPOTS, AND COMPLACENTLY DISREGARD ANY CHAFFING CRITICISM. IT IS THE DUTY OF A SCOUT TO FOLLOW NATURE'S TEACHING."

Listen intently when near such places, and especially notice if the cattle or live-stock are restlessly moving about. If strangers are there they will cause cattle and farm stock to be uneasy, and you will hear them shuffling about. With luck you might hear a German snoring in his sleep; if so, remember the *Lusitania!* In short, when scouting buildings, stacks, etc., act as though you knew for certain there was a sniper there with a telescopic sight on his rifle, ready to fire at you. Practise scouting farm buildings at home, by night as well as by day; you cannot do this too often.

Were I a scout at the Front I should stain my hands and face with a permanent stain, especially my wrists and forehead. I would even mottle my uniform and cap with leopard-like spots, and complacently disregard any chaffing criticism, well knowing that hardly a single wild animal or bird (whose habitat is on land) is clad in one unbroken shade of colour. (*See* Illustration No. 6.) It is the duty of a scout to follow Nature's teaching; it is plain enough.

Scouting by Night.

No one can walk perfectly straight across a big field in the daytime, much less in the

dark. A man always wanders in a rough circle at night. The direction of the wind may help him to find his way, a knowledge of the stars, or a compass, if he has one. An observant man seldom gets lost. Every soldier should practise night walking in the open country at home. Only those who are constantly out for hours in the open country at night acquire "night eyes." For the want of them I once fell over a slumbering bullock in the dark. I thought there was an earthquake! Possibly the bullock thought it had got nightmare!

Never smoke in the dark; every time you light a match you lose your "night eyes" for a minute or two, and you are signalling your position foolishly. Further, in the dark you cannot taste tobacco-smoke, and don't deserve to, either.

Accustom yourself to being out alone in the open fields by night, and the darker the better, for hours at a time, now at home; it will help you immensely when you are on duty at the Front. I know of a sentry here in Sussex who was so nervous that he shot at his own shadow one bright, moonlight night—fortunately he was only supplied with blank cartridge, so there was no bloodshed.

Scouting in Woods and Forests.

There is much forest and woodland on the Continent in which fighting and scouting are inevitable. Never enter a wood of any size without first making a keen survey of its exterior outline; note if there is any high ground or a tall clump of trees in the wood which you could recognize from the inside. You may want to get out in a hurry—think of this before you go in. Once you are in, go slow—very slow, and note, and perhaps mark, trees on the side you may want to return by; a gash with a knife will do.

There are often streams, ditches, and dry gullies in woods, in which places the vegetation is generally thickest. In reconnoitring, as far as possible, follow these up very carefully; you will be less easily seen.

If there are wide paths, or rides, in a wood, never go straight along them; that would be tempting Providence. Skirt these open spaces; be careful how you cross them even; slip across like a shadow, perhaps on your stomach. Better have your stomach in a puddle than your heart in your mouth, or a bullet in your brain. Wild birds and animals instinctively act with great caution on open spaces in woods; take their example. In crossing a ride in a wood take advantage of all shadows, avoid all sun-washed open spaces.

If you are suspicious of some feature or screen don't go straight up to it, as though you were going to put a letter in a pillar-box. Go round, take time, and look at that place sideways, from above or below; take nothing for granted. Never neglect a first impression, that is a sort of God-given instinct—a relic, it may be, of a lost sense. In dealing with persons the same applies.

Note the behaviour of labourers in the fields; watch closely, you may detect a hostile scout.

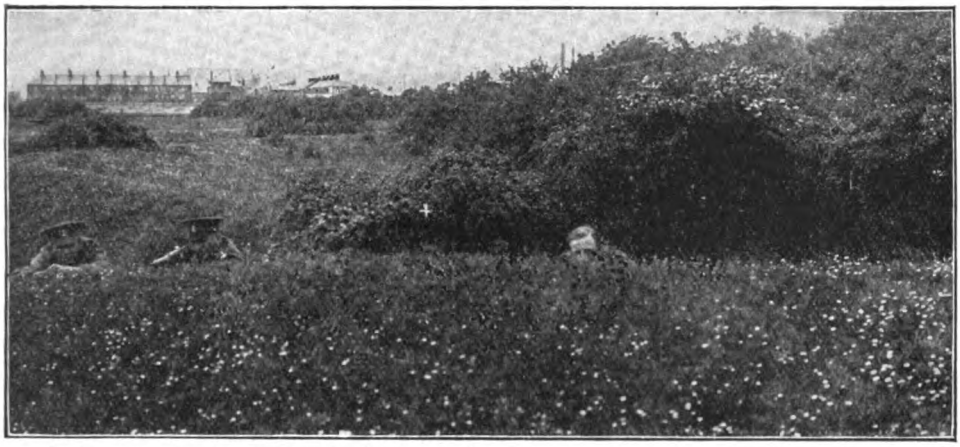
Take notice of all footmarks of men and horses, observe which way they point. Obtain a German's boot as soon as you arrive at the Front, preferably after bayonet exercise, and get the shape of the sole and heel in your head, after you have wiped your bayonet; then you can detect a German footprint.

Don't display your tracks heedlessly. Look out for empty German cartridge-cases; that may help you to spot a sniper's hiding-place, perhaps in the branches of a tree above. Leave no sign of your own presence—not even a cigarette-end.

Practise squirming along the ground at full length, like a crocodile. It is very dirty and unpleasant sometimes (I have done a mile or two in my time, when stalking), but it is imperative in places. Be sure and cover your wrists, which are very light coloured. Keep your rifle in front, always muzzle first, ready to shoot in an instant; and take care not to get snow or mud into the muzzle, that is sometimes fatal. If you fire, load again instantly—don't get up, like an idiot, with an empty rifle (I have done it when shooting; I am the idiot!). Don't fix your bayonet when scouting; the steel will show far too plainly. Take every precaution to keep the breech of your rifle clean. Wrap it round with some dark cloth, if necessary; an old stocking does very well. If you are supplied with a white respirator stain it somehow, otherwise it will show far too plainly, especially at night, under flares.

If, when scouting alone, you hit a German, or think you have, and he stumbles or falls, keep a bead on him—he may be shamming. Take no risks; you wouldn't if you were tiger-shooting. Certain crafty, wild beasts sham death—why not a German? He may have a revolver handy; though, of course, a scout's first duty is to observe, and therefore only to kill in self-defence when there is no alternative, and even then with cold steel if possible.

Remember that very frequently the north



7.—SCOUT CAREFULLY CONCEALED (SEE CROSS). SOLDIER ON RIGHT WITH BARE HEAD VERY CONSPICUOUS, AS ARE ALSO THE SERVICE CAPS ON THE LEFT.

side of a tree-trunk has rougher bark than the south side. Also, it is usually greener.

If it is dark and you are uncertain which way to go, feel with your hands round a tree-trunk. Near the ground it will be frequently greasier and rougher on the north side than on the south side, and so you will know the north point. The prevailing wind is south-west, and it bunches small trees and shrubs towards the north-east; this will give you a rough idea of the points of the compass.

You can hear sounds more clearly with your ears near the ground. Be careful not to set long grass on fire by heedlessly throwing down matches. Don't smoke when you are on business bent connected with Germans.

A list of soldiers was printed the other day stating why each had earned the new military distinction. In many cases it was for "Bravery and marked ability," in some instances for "Skill in reconnoitring." Bravery is good, but cool, calculating skill in thought, observation, and scouting is equally necessary in a soldier who desires a medal and promotion. Think of the awful havoc which may result from one cunningly-hidden machine-gun. What a glorious moment to the scout who spots a hostile one. It is done frequently; your chance will come soon. A few twigs, or thistles, or tufts of herbage will suffice to screen a recumbent man with a machine-gun. Suspect all little humpy screens in woods, hedges, fields, potato-patches, ploughed fields; very soon you will instinctively know whether such a screen is natural or artificial. Look closely for foot-marks or trails in long grass, leading towards suspicious points, making a careful circuit for this purpose. Remember that in searching for one thing you sometimes get information about another. Laborious searching, by a trained observer, is sure to tell sooner or later.

In moving about, study to go quietly. A wild-fowler sometimes covers his boots with old sacking or cloth to deaden sound, which has the extreme quiet of a Red Indian's moccasin. Poachers do the same, and so do gamekeepers. That is why gamekeepers and poachers make splendid soldiers; they have already found that out in the trenches. If there are any gamekeepers or poachers present, please hold up your hands; don't hesitate, you will probably be promoted to be scouts. "The enterprising burglar" would make a fine scout. If anyone here knows of one, get him to enlist.

Never move forward without a close study of your front and sides. Practise tree-climbing, also remaining stiff as a recumbent statue for an hour at a time. A scout often finds out more when hidden up than in roving. This is intensely true; it is desperately difficult to restrain an inclination to move when you feel you ought to stay where you are. When roving, look behind occasionally. Always act as though there was a German after you. Practise looking fixedly at a tree or a small open space for half an hour or so without moving your eyes for a moment. Keep on doing this; it is of supreme importance, obviously.

Every regimental library should have all Fenimore Cooper's Indian story-books, and every soldier should read them; also "The Amateur Poacher," by Richard Jefferies, and, of course, all the Sherlock Holmes stories without exception.

Don't blunder noisily along a wood, like

a driven bullock. I have seen a great bull-elk amble along in a Russian forest; he was in a hurry, too, yet he went away silently, almost like a shadow. He knew the value of silence, and certainly, he never lost his way.

Sound travels with horrible ease in a wood. Go slowly and with extreme care, from tree to tree or from bush to bush, always on the shady side when possible; watch and listen for all you are worth. If the trees are big, and thick with leaves, look up, as well as in front and around. Few wild beasts ever look up, but a man should. Most town-bred soldiers fail here. There have actually been recent cases at the Front where our men, fighting in a wood, have failed to notice Germans hidden up in trees right above them; and in winter time, too!

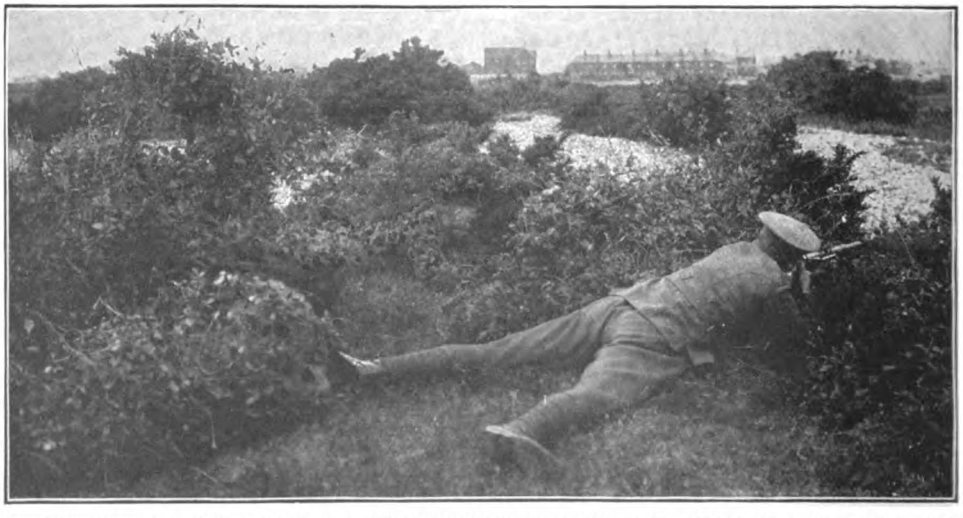
8.—OFFICERS OBSERVING FRONT, SHOWING HOW MUCH LESS CONSPICUOUS IS THE NEW SOFT SERVICE CAP THAN THE ORDINARY ONE.

Importance of Observing Behaviour of Wild Birds and Animals.

Now here a knowledge of birds and animals should help. You will seldom find birds, rabbits, or hares in the inner depths of a big wood; the outskirts are sometimes full of them. You might find a hidden battery, though!

Before entering a wood, notice if the birds are leaving it hurriedly, or trying to settle, and not doing so; which means that there are men about. If birds freely enter a wood, or a hedge, and stay there, you may be sure there is no man there.

Personally, I wouldn't dream of scouting with a Service cap on, unless I had previously sat or stamped on it sideways. I would almost as soon have a full moon on my head. (*See* Illustrations 7 & 8, showing how prominent these caps are, and how easily they may be



9.—"HIDE YOURSELF CLEVERLY, TAKING CARE TO COVER YOUR LEGS. IT IS THE LEGS OF A MAN WHICH REVEAL HIS PRESENCE MOST."

made less noticeable by mottling them, after the fashion of a woodcock's plumage.)

If there is a man, or a body of men in a wood, all the birds and animals know it. They will be uneasy, and show it. Hide yourself cleverly, taking care to cover your legs so that neither man, beasts, nor birds can see them; it is the legs of a man which reveal his presence most. (*See* Illustration No. 9.) Then note the behaviour of the birds and animals by eye and ear. A rabbit may come along, obviously uneasy; he will stop and listen with ears upright, and then dart off away from danger. A pheasant may come along, also uneasy; he has spotted a man or a body of men somewhere, just as surely as he will presently spot you. They know, and they will indicate to another near you (if there is one) that you are there, which may or may not be awkward. Wood-pigeons and jays are marvellously clever, and give noisy warning when disturbed—if you are the disturber lie low for a time and listen and observe intently before you move on.

Small birds behave in the same way. They are not so plentiful in France as in England, but still they are there.

My brother (alas, now in a soldier's grave!), when in the trenches in France, on Christmas morning, near Peronne, had breakfast with a robin, some chaffinches, and bullfinches. He loved birds, and they found him out even in the firing-line. He often heard plover and partridges calling at night.

There are, of course, birds in the open fields, as well as in hedgerows and woods. Seagulls, herons, rooks, magpies, jackdaws, hawks, wood-pigeons, partridges, starlings, plover, and all sorts of birds as in England. Watch these, and they will tell you something useful.

When you are lying up on duty, note the behaviour of the birds flying past. Rooks, crows, jackdaws, and wood-pigeons take long flights. They know their districts perfectly; so ought you (Hindenburg scored heavily over the Russians because he knew every inch of the Masurian Lake country). If you see birds flying low and easily, you can be sure there is no disturbing element about; but if you see a crow or a wood-pigeon, for instance, suddenly swerve and dart upwards, you may be sure that he has seen a man or a body of men, possibly inside a wood, behind hedges, in a trench, or in a farm-yard, or hiding on roofs. Don't think, for a moment, that you can hide your body in a hedge, ditch, or gully, or behind a bush so that birds won't see you. You can't do it.

Watch all long-flight birds keenly, you will learn something. Let the habit grow on you. You ought to know by instinct the difference in the flight of a tame pigeon and a wild one. A carrier-pigeon conveys messages, you know.

Sounds Made by Birds at Night.

It is extremely important to listen to the flight and cries of birds at night. If you hear the swish of wings in the dark, say, from a covey of partridges or wood-pigeons crashing out of a thicket, then you know there is a disturbing element about. If you hear partridges calling at night in a field, you may be pretty sure there is no one there; that may be useful. Small birds, thrushes, blackbirds, larks, and birds generally make a noise when disturbed at night; so do hens, ducks, and geese. You may hear them some distance off. Why are they disturbed? Find out.

All this may sound like "tommy-rot" to some of you, but wait till you are in the trenches or on a scouting expedition, and in a lull in the dead of the night you hear strange sounds. It is your business to know what's afoot. A trained observer is seldom mystified, so work hard and become one here at home.

In conclusion I want to paint a picture.

Imagine yourself at the Front, on sentry duty in the trenches one morning at dawn. You, being a trained observer, had got in your brain the previous night every detail of the ground in front and around. Well, the moment the light came, you, of course, looked all about you, and in a moment you spotted something in the near distance that wasn't there the previous day. You at once reported what you saw, an officer hurried up with his field-glasses, and after careful examination he declared, "Private Brown, that's splendid! You have done it, by Jove! Those are German machine-guns." Soon that place which you, on your own initiative, pointed out was shelled to pieces, and that same day you were Corporal Brown, only because you proved yourself a trained observer by careful practice at home.

Far too many British officers and men have been killed by German snipers. If you have, as you must have, affection for your officers, who have done, and are doing, so much for you, then now is the time to become trained observers and brilliant scouts, so that when you get to the Front you may bear the hostile marksmen down, and take a long, long toll of the German officers and snipers and avenge ours who have fallen.

Providing for Hester

By

ARTHUR ECKERSLEY

Illustrated by
G-HENRY-EVISON

AS Hester opened the door an elder woman, who was sitting beside the fire, glanced up with a faint air of protest.

"There you are," she said. "I thought you were never coming; and your father might be here any minute. Where have you been?"

"Only as far as the pier for a blow," the girl answered. There was a little colour in her cheeks that might have been the effect of this, and her eyes were shining. Hester Hartley was approaching the age when an unmarried woman may be spoken of by the vulgar as "no chicken"; tall, angular, with a usually plain face that to-night, however, was flushed into a look almost of attractiveness. She smoothed her hair, a strand of which the wind had unsettled, and stooped as though in search of something.

"He's got cutlets for tea, hasn't he?" she asked. "He" was her father.

"And asparagus," answered Mrs. Hartley, with housewifely pride.

"I'm glad of that," the girl said. "Asparagus-evenings are almost always good-tempered."

"What a way to talk!" Then, as Hester advanced towards the fire, "What have you got there?"

"I thought I'd put his slippers to warm."

"Well!" said Mrs. Hartley, surprised.

"Mother," said Hester, suddenly, on her knees before the fire, "you know I've always tried to be a good daughter to you and father."

"I don't know one thing," answered her mother, still apparently possessed by a vague sense of grievance—"and that's what has come over you lately to make you so fidgety."

"Don't you? Has it ever occurred to you how old I am?"

She put the question dispassionately, not looking at her mother, but staring into the fire. Mrs. Hartley was visibly discomposed by it.

"My dear!" she said, bewildered.

"I'm twenty-eight and a bit over. Quite soon I shall be thirty."

"We all of us have to grow old," observed Mrs. Hartley.

"Yes," the girl answered. "But we live first; some do, at any rate. Mother," she went on, "think! Do for once think of it from my point of view. What have I been doing all this time? Just sitting here with you and father, and letting everything go by me. I've wanted not to mind. Night after night I've cried myself to sleep—"

"Everybody can't get husbands, if that's what you mean," said Mrs. Hartley, sententiously. "You've had the same chance as other girls."

"No!" The fierce yet controlled voice shook a little. "That's not true! Every chance—it's your own word—that ever I had has been deliberately taken away from me. I know I'm not pretty or attractive; I've made up my mind to that. But in spite of it, there were people——"

She broke off, almost as though struggling for breath. Then, in a different tone, went on:—

"Do you remember that Mr. Thompson, when I first went to help at the library, six years ago? He used to walk home with me. Then he asked if he could call. Well—you know what happened then!"

"Your father never approved of that library," said Mrs. Hartley. "Almost a shop, he called it."

"Anyhow," Hester continued, "that's all in the past. And—and I thought it wasn't the sort of thing that was ever likely to happen again."

A great light began to dawn on her hearer. "You don't mean to say it has!" she gasped.

"Apparently."

"Well! But"—instinctively the elder woman's mind turned to what was its invariable problem in moments of stress—"what about your father?"

Hester pointed laconically to the slippers, now warming before a cheery blaze. "That's why!" she said.

"You're going to tell him to-night?" asked Mrs. Hartley, awestruck.

"I think he means to tell him himself."

The significance of this new "he" was by no means lost upon the mother. She stared at her daughter, at first incredulously, then with gradually increasing interest. "I'm that surprised I don't know what to say," she said. "How did it come about?"

Hester mused for a second without answering. Then she said, slowly, "I saw him first only about a fortnight ago, when I went out to the post in the evening. He used to be hanging about by the pillar, as though he were waiting for somebody. Of course, I never thought he could be waiting for me. But—he was. And one thing seemed to lead to another. I met him once or twice by accident. Then I began to arrange meetings."

"Well!" said Mrs. Hartley. Hers was the age-old astonishment of parents at the duplicity of youth. "What's his name?" she asked.

"George Perrin," said Hester. After a moment, knowing the question to be only a cover for others, she added: "He works at something in London, I don't know what. He's down here on a holiday."

"Well!" repeated the mother again. "And what—what does he talk about?"

"That's one of the strangest things. He seems so interested in—in us. Me, and you, and father. He's never done with asking questions."

There was a certain pathos in the naïve surprise that was lost upon Mrs. Hartley. "Your father don't like his affairs gossiped about," she said, sharply.

It was quite true, as experience had taught Hester before this. Ever since she could remember anything she could recall as the motto of her parent, "Keep ourselves to ourselves." That was why life had been so monotonously quiet, why no visitors came to the little house in the side street that was her home, why her few friendships had been so assiduously discouraged.

"Oh," she said, defensive, "I didn't tell him much. How could I? Something in the City, that's all. But it seemed so queer and wonderful that he should want to know!"

Mrs. Hartley brushed this on one side. "And he's coming to see your father about it to-night?" she persisted.

"I told him any time after seven," said Hester.

The words had scarcely left her lips when both women started guiltily at the familiar sound of a key being inserted in the front door. Their eyes met. "I declare," said Mrs. Hartley, rising tremulously, "you've made me all of a fluster. We—we must keep calm, and tell him gradually."

Then the door opened, and the subject of their remark came in quickly.

Rupert Hartley was a small, neatly-dressed man, who scarcely gave one the impression of a domestic tyrant. His lined face and thin, grey beard might have belonged to any age from fifty upwards. As usual on his return from the "office" he carried a small and much-worn leather bag, which he placed on a corner of the mantelshelf before nodding to the two women and sinking into the one comfortable chair that the room contained—the same from which Mrs. Hartley had just risen.

"Evening, mother!" he said. "Halloa, kiddie!" to Hester. "Well, here I am again. And glad to be back."

"Had a tiring day, father?" asked Mrs. Hartley, solicitously.

"So-so. Bit more work than usual, because I'm giving up that Cannon Street office."

"Why!" said Mrs. Hartley, surprised, "that's the third change this year!"

"Yes. And I'll tell you what, old lady," returned her husband—"I'm thinking about making a bigger change yet, and giving up altogether."

"Giving up?"

"Aye. Chucking business, and settling down here to enjoy my old age. I've earned it." Suddenly he broke off, with a look of astonishment. "Halloa! Who's been putting my slippers to warm?"

A hurried signal of intelligence passed between Mrs. Hartley and Hester; then the latter, nerving herself with an effort, answered, "I did, father."

"Wants something out of her dad, I'll be bound!" returned Hartley, heavily playful. "Well, well, we'll discuss that after tea. Is it ready?"

"Here's Susan just coming," said Mrs. Hartley; and in effect at that moment the maid appeared with a tray. "There's cutlets and asparagus, Rupert," she added.

"Capital!" He mused for a space, employed in changing from boots to the warmed slippers. "Yes. Settle down," he continued, half aloud. "Sit on the pier in the mornings. Maybe an alderman before I've finished. That would be the crowning touch!" with a chuckle.

"I'm sure I don't see why you shouldn't be, Rupert," purred Mrs. Hartley, but the tribute passed unheeded. Her husband had lifted the black bag on to his knee, and was engaged in abstractedly running his eye over certain papers that he had taken from it.

The family watched in respectful silence. Susan, having completed her task, went out. Then, suddenly, Hester spoke again, breaking the hush with an effect strangely significant and electrical.

"Father," she said, "there's—there's a visitor coming to see you to-night."

Hartley set down his papers and turned to face the speaker. He could hardly have looked more surprised if the table had found a voice.

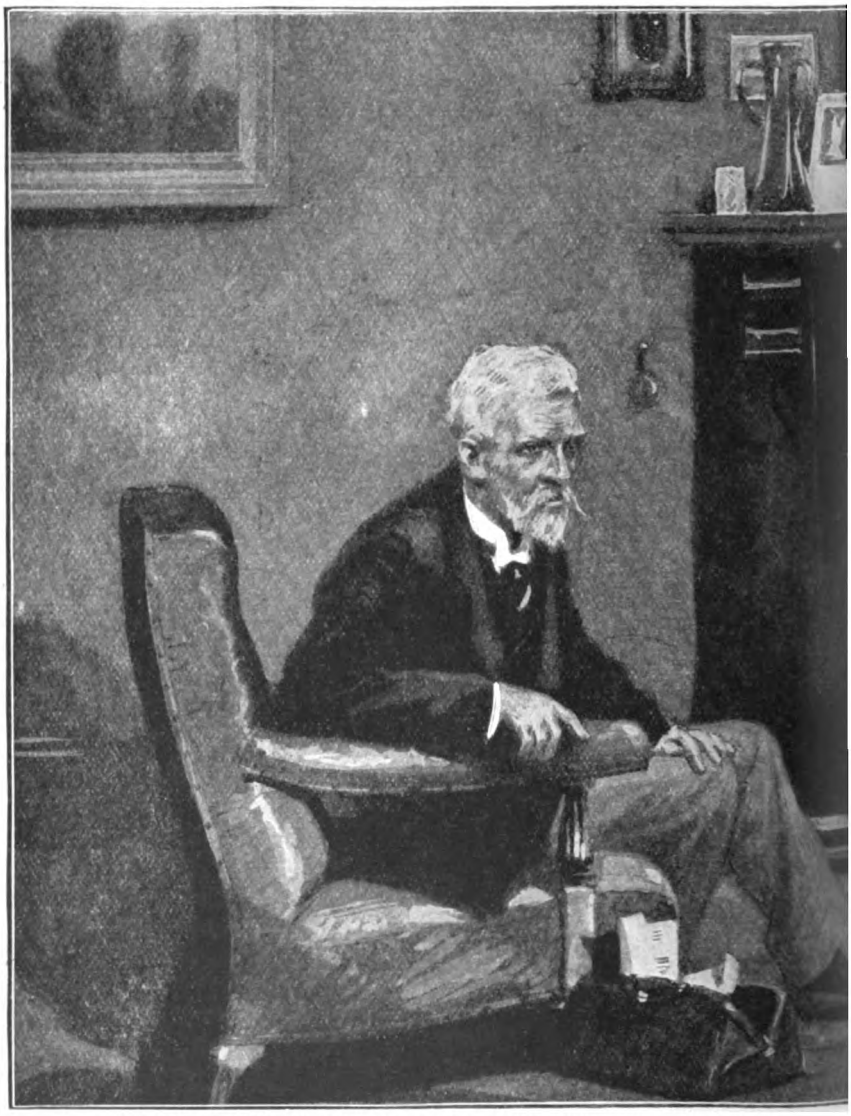
"Visitor?" he repeated.

Poor Mrs. Hartley gathered consternation from her lord's tone. "Only—only a man, Rupert," she ventured, lamely.

The remark was ignored. "Who is it?" repeated Hartley, frowning at his daughter.

"Mr. Perrin, his name is, father. He's a friend of mine."

"A friend of yours!" Hard to reproduce the incredulity of the last word; it stung the girl like a blow. A spot of colour appeared in her pale cheeks, but she controlled herself with an effort. "He wants to speak to you about something," she said.



"'WHO IS IT?' REPEATED HARTLEY, FROWNING AT HIS DAUGHTER.

"Oh, does he? And about what, if I may ask?"

"Father, surely you can understand!"

Mrs. Hartley essayed another timid interpolation. "It's like that young Thompson was, Rupert, from the library," she explained. This time her effort had more success. Hartley stared from mother to daughter with a look of gradual comprehension. Then he flung himself back in his chair and laughed uproariously.

"Oh, that's it, is it?" he cried "More flirtations!" The relief of his manner was obvious, if incomprehensible.

'MR. PERRIN, HIS NAME IS, FATHER. HE'S A FRIEND OF MINE.'"

"He asked the child if he might call," ventured Mrs. Hartley, encouraged.

"So you're in it too, eh, mother?"

"I? No, Rupert; dear me, no! I've never even seen him."

"I've told you, father," said Hester, "George Perrin is a friend of mine, so he naturally wants to meet you."

"Does he?" Her parent waxed sarcastic. "Very flattered, I'm sure. Wants to meet my money, too, I dare say."

"You've no right to say that, before you've even seen him."

"Hoity-toity!" Hartley bantered her. "I apologize. But," with a change of tone, "I've a fairly shrewd idea of the kind of idle young waster that comes buzzing round a girl if he thinks her father is well off. Somebody no one's ever heard of."

It seemed that both the elder Hartleys regarded this as a strong point in the suitor's disfavour. "Where did you pick him up?"

"In the street," returned Hester, defiant. "Where else should I meet anyone?"

"I thought as much!"

"Yes. Because you've kept us, mother and me, shut up all these years, as if you were afraid to let us be seen. And already you've made up your mind. You're going to take the worst view of it, and put obstacles in the way. Well! I've made up my mind, too. You sha'n't treat me any more as though I were a child!"

A sudden flame of rage had blazed up in the girl, transfiguring her. The words came in an impetuous torrent from her lips.

"I mean it!" she cried. "We're past all that now. I've put up with it because I was weak and a coward, but now——"

She stopped suddenly, arrested by the only sound that could have produced this effect—the ringing of the front-door bell. There was a moment's silence.

"And now?" repeated Hartley.

"That's maybe him," whispered Mrs. Hartley.

"Perhaps." Hester's father rose slowly from his seat. He addressed the girl with a kind of grudging respect. "Well, I'll see this young man. Mind," he added, checking a movement of gratitude, "I make no promises. But I'll see him."

"You'd better go and open the door, dear," suggested Mrs. Hartley.

"She'd better do no such thing!" snapped her husband. "What do we keep a servant for? Let Susan go."

"Yes, Rupert," said Mrs. Hartley, meekly. So they all waited, in a tense, expectant silence.

The man who entered was about Hester's age, quietly dressed, and not ill-looking. He came in briskly, with an air of alert self-confidence that gradually yielded, in the awkward pause that ensued, to one faintly amused, and as faintly antagonistic.

Hartley returned his greeting with a nod; the women said nothing.

The visitor shuffled his feet and glanced from father to mother, a quick look of inquiry. Not once did he turn his eyes in the direction of Hester, who watched the scene, herself miserably embarrassed and self-conscious.

At last Hartley bent a grim smile on his visitor; it was clear that he had been enjoying the general discomfiture.

"You came to see me?" he asked.

Perrin faced him, quietly resolute. "I ventured to ask Miss Hartley when I should find you at home," he said.

"Well—you have."

"With a view to five minutes' conversation with you in private."

Rupert Hartley turned towards his wife. "Hear that?" he asked. Mrs. Hartley rose obediently. "Perhaps I'd better go and put tea back a bit, Rupert," she said.

"Aye, do," he answered. "This young gentleman says five minutes; give us ten." Secretly Hester's father had been impressed by the demeanour of her suitor. But it was not his method to betray this.

Mrs. Hartley fluttered towards the door that was politely held open for her by the young man. The smile of timid encouragement that she ventured to bestow upon Perrin met, however, with no response. He looked very stern, she thought.

Then at last Hester spoke. "Do you want me to go, too, father?"

"I?" Hartley was grimly sardonic. "I've not been consulted."

For a moment the girl hesitated. Then, "Very well," she said, and followed Mrs. Hartley, with head erect.

Perrin, who had not met her eyes, closed the door, and returned slowly towards his host.

"Now," began Hartley, comfortably. "It doesn't need much guessing on my part to twig what you're after."

Perrin glanced at him. "There I think you may be mistaken, Mr. Hartley," he said.

"Oh, I may, may I? Well, sit down, anyway."

"Thanks."

"You have not," continued Hartley, lighting his pipe, "come here after my girl, I suppose? Oh, dear, no!" He chuckled.

"No," answered Perrin. "As a matter of fact, I've come here after you."

"After me?" The match burnt unnoticed to his fingers. Hartley was staring at the young man with a face grown suddenly grey and startled. Then he laughed uneasily. "This is some sort of a joke, eh?" he said.

"Not at all," returned the other. "Perfectly serious. Perhaps I might have made my meaning clearer if I had addressed you by the name of Ross."

"Ross!" The shadow on the listener's face deepened. "I—I don't understand you!"

"Oh, yes, I think you do. And let's see, there was Carmichael before that, wasn't there? And Watson?"

The pipe fell to the ground as Hartley sprang up, livid and furious. "Out of my house!" he shouted.

Perrin did not move. "Yes," he said, placidly, "that's about the only argument you've got left. And not a good one."

His cool self-assurance was not without its effect on the elder man. After staring at him for a moment, Hartley flung himself back in his chair again.

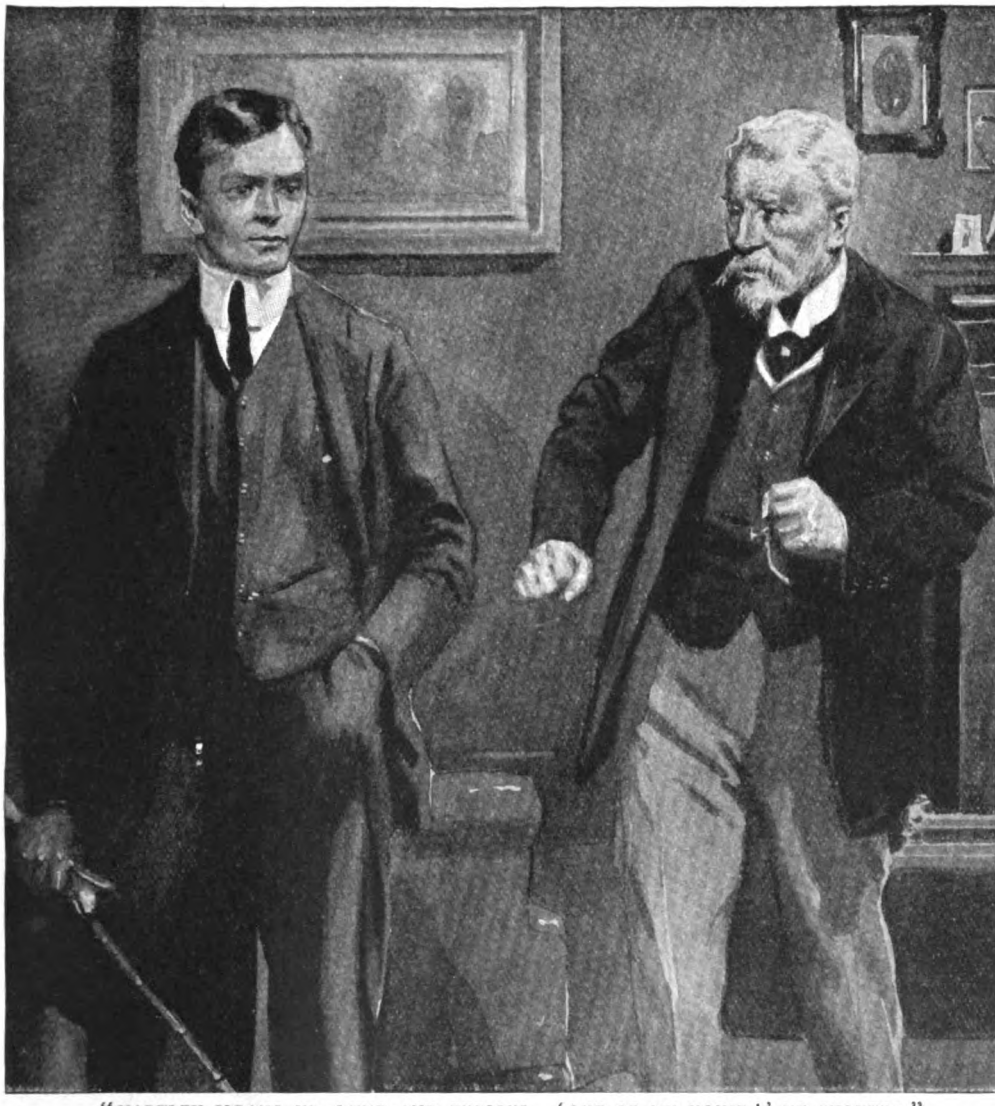
"You think you know a fat lot!" he snarled. "Let's hear it. Mind, I admit nothing. But let's hear it."

"That's more reasonable," answered Perrin. "And your admissions, Mr. Hartley, would really be superfluous. Our information is remarkably complete."

Seeing that the other merely stared at him in silence, he produced a bulky pocket-book and slipped back the elastic. "To explain the position," he said, "it may be necessary for me to trouble you with a few details as to my own career. You don't mind?"

"One minute!" Hartley interrupted him huskily. "What are you—a detective?"

"Oh, dear, no!" said Perrin, smiling.



"HARTLEY SPRANG UP, LIVID AND FURIOUS. 'OUT OF MY HOUSE!' HE SHOUTED."

"Nothing so melodramatic. I'm a journalist, Mr. Hartley."

"A journalist?"

"An investigator, if you prefer the term. It's rather a new development of the power of the Press. As a matter of fact, the idea of my present job came to me somewhat suddenly through a man you may have heard of, named Horace Walford."

"Walford!" For the second time Hartley seemed to stagger beneath the shock of astonishment. "He's dead."

"Yes. But he wasn't when I met him. It was about a year ago. You may recall the circumstances. He was run over by a motor and died shortly afterwards. At that time he was in your employ as, shall we say, confidential clerk?"

Hartley moistened his dry lips. "If you've come here to blackmail me about Walford—" he muttered. "I did everything I could for the man."

"Ah, precisely! An elementary precaution that you would hardly neglect. No. My point is that at the time we speak of I was a young reporter, and was sent by the paper I then represented to interview Walford after the accident. He wasn't able to tell me much, but his wife volunteered to take down a few facts as soon as he was able to

recount them, for which I might call later in the day. When I came again the man was unconscious, but I got the paper. It was lying with others on the table by his bed—the others being those that had been in his pocket when he was brought home.

"In the interests of my profession I naturally glanced through these, and eventually took copies of them. You can perhaps recall their character?"

A half-articulate oath broke from Hartley.

"Precisely!" agreed the young man. "Amongst other things, they gave one of the most thoroughly incriminating accounts possible of Carmichael and Co., who had recently baffled the police with so much success. This, of course, interested me, and with it in my possession I was able to work backwards and forwards till I had a fairly clear idea of your activities."

He consulted the pocket-book. "I know, for example, all about the begging-letter business in '89, and again, under different names, in 1907 and last winter. Then there was the bucket-shop—Watson, wasn't it?—much the same dodge as you've been working just lately as Ross. As for the rest——"

"Stop!" Hartley had risen; he steadied himself with one hand on the back of his chair, passing the other over his forehead, which was damp and gleaming.

"There's plenty more," said the visitor. He glanced curiously at his victim; then replaced the pocket-book.

Hartley seemed to have abandoned all pretence of denial. "Thirty-five years, nearly," he was muttering to himself, "and only to-day I'd made up my mind to give it up and settle down with my earnings!"

Perrin's ears caught the last word. "Ah," he said, briskly business-like. "Those must be a tidy sum by now. I should, of course, be glad of any additional particulars. It all adds to the interest."

Hartley did not seem to heed. "What are you going to do about it?" he asked, dully.

"At present," said Perrin, "our intention is to publish your whole story in weekly instalments, leaving the authorities to take what steps they choose."

"That means—smash!" The old man's hand went to his mouth and fluttered there, irresolute. He looked so broken and pitiable that the journalist averted his eyes.

"Of course, Mr. Hartley," he said, "I sympathize with you, but you'll understand that for us the thing is a pure matter of business."

"Would money square you?"

"Hardly what you would be in a position to offer. We've been to considerable expense over this investigation, and naturally we look for a big return. Frankly, you ought to be a scoop, Mr. Hartley. Indeed, it'll be the biggest thing the *Lantern* has done yet."

"The—*what!*" The words had broken from Hartley with such a vehemence of surprise that Perrin started.

"The *Lantern*," he explained. "The weekly paper for which I am working."

"Heavens! That's done it!"

Perrin stared, bewildered, at the startling change that his words had produced in the old man. "Done what?" he asked.

"Let me out!" cried Hartley. "What an escape!"

His eyes shone and every muscle of his face was working convulsively. He came and stood over the young man, looking down upon him in triumph. "Why, man," he cried, "you and your investigations and your *Lantern*—they're mine!"

"Yours?" For a moment Perrin supposed that the shock had turned the other's brain; he seemed to be raving.

"Mine, I tell you! I am the *Lantern!* Nine-tenths of the money for it is my money, that I made and saved and put in. I could smash it to-morrow if I chose." He burst into a shout of laughter. "You've been investigating your owner, my lad!"

"Mr. Hartley," the young man stammered, overcome by this sudden turn of events, "this is a serious matter! How do I know that you are speaking the truth?"

"Truth?" Hartley cried. "You go back and ask your editor who holds his shares. Bliss and Saker, those are the two chief proprietors. Both me!"

"I—I hardly know what to say."

"Of course you don't!" The old rogue was magnanimous in his triumph. "I bear you no malice! This appeals to my sense of humour, that's what it does!" He picked up his pipe, which had fallen, disregarded, from his lips in the shock of exposure, and settled himself again in his chair.

"Yes," he said, chuckling reflectively; "the *Lantern's* been a good proposition, though I never realized till now how good. But I knew there'd be plenty of the godly willing to pay their Wednesday penny to see the others tormented!"

"The *Lantern* is doing a great work," remarked Perrin, stiffly. He seemed to be vainly trying to recover his self-possession.

"Quite so," agreed Hartley. "That's what I say. I'm perfectly satisfied."

"But your information naturally places me in a somewhat awkward position."

The other chuckled again. "You did that to me, my lad," he said, "five minutes ago. When you called me Ross just then it was one of the nastiest shocks I've had. And I've had some bad ones in my time; moments when I've felt the rope round my neck."

"Fraud is not a capital offence, Mr. Hartley," observed Perrin.

"Well, well! Can't I express myself!" His escape had brought back all the truculence of the master of the house. He began to talk boastfully, recounting one successful knavery after another; it was as though, the necessity for his long concealment over, self-glorification could no longer be denied. Perrin listened in an embarrassed and somewhat wistful silence. There was material here and in plenty; but the pity was that it should be unusable. At last he rose.

"This is all very interesting," he said; "but perhaps I ought to be moving. We are keeping Mrs. and Miss Hartley waiting."

The words brought Hester's father to an abrupt pause. He recalled suddenly an element in the situation that had been altogether forgotten. "Miss Hartley," he repeated, in a changed voice. "Thanks for reminding me. You got admission here in the first place by making love to my girl."

Perrin began to look uncomfortable. "Hardly quite that," he said; "but I was obliged to obtain some particulars, and—well, there was only one obvious way."

Hartley regarded him, not for the first time, with a kind of admiration. "Pretty cool customer, aren't you?" he said. "Oh, I'm not blaming you. Every man to his job, and—you look like succeeding in yours."

"I mean to," answered Perrin, as one who acknowledges a compliment. "But I'm not saying," he added, after a moment, "that I wouldn't rather not have had to do it. I've got my feelings, same as other people."

"I see," said Hartley. "Then there was really nothing between Hester and you? It was a mere—matter of business?"

"I admired your daughter, of course. Very greatly admired her. If I were in a position to marry, I might even—— That was what made me hate what I was doing. But, after all—duty is duty."

"A noble sentiment."

Perrin was anxious to end the interview, the recent turn of which was by no means to his taste. "So I'll wish you good evening," he said. "I shall, of course, tell the editor that this affair goes no farther."

"You can leave that to me," said Hartley, grimly. "And the results—er—of your investigation?"

"Naturally, I shall take those somewhere else."

If Hartley was staggered for a moment by this frank avowal he did not show it. "I wonder," he said. Then, watching his visitor closely, he added: "I've been getting the notion, Perrin, during the last few minutes, that I might take a hand in the *Lantern* myself. I'll want something to fill up my time; and there's good money in it if it was properly run."

"Undoubtedly." Perrin looked, with excuse, a little mystified as to the precise bearing of this remark.

"If I had a live man to work with," went on Hartley, "who meant to succeed, I'd make it worth his while. We'd have to do something with the present chap, because he knows too much to be chucked. But there's a fortune waiting for the fellow that I choose to push."

Perrin began to think he saw daylight. "Do you mean me?" he asked, bluntly.

All at once Hartley had become the man of affairs, keen and business-like. "Look here, Perrin," he said, drawing a chair to the table beside which the young man sat, and confronting him eagerly. "You've been spooning my girl. To you, perhaps, it was nothing; just a trick of your trade."

"I've explained all that."

"Not to her," persisted Hartley; "she thinks it serious. So far as I can make out, she actually likes you. Now, I've always intended that if a man came along who wasn't a fool or too much of a knave, he could have her." He leant back, watching the effect of his words. "Well?"

Perrin had changed countenance. The rapidity of the other's tactics bewildered and shocked him. "Mr. Hartley," he exclaimed, "your attitude is preposterous. The thing's impossible!"

"Why? Are you married already?"

"Certainly not."

"Very well, then," said Hartley, with an air of relief. "Let me tell you it's not such a bad offer. I make it," he went on, cunningly, "because I believe that if you and I got together there's almost nothing we couldn't do."

The suggestion was flattering, if ambiguous. Perrin was clearly moved by it.

"It's a risk, of course," went on Hartley. "To speak candidly, you aren't anything like worthy of Hester in one way. But a man

"'IT WAS FOR SUSAN I RANG,' HE SAID, IRRITABLY. 'TO SHOW THIS—GENTLEMAN—OUT.'"

can be a pretty big rogue and a good husband. I ought to know that."

"You forget," Perrin suggested, "that there is also a certain risk attached to entering your family."

"Not at all," returned the head of it. "But the money is safe, anyhow. I'd settle my interest in the *Lantern* on Hester. She'd have that—whatever happened to me."

"I see," said Perrin. He was still confused, but thinking.

"So there it is," continued Hartley. "One of my professional maxims has always been—When you see what you want, don't

waste time. I've made my offer; take it or leave it!" He leant back with an air of finality.

It was perhaps this manner that decided Perrin. It made him forget what he had just now admitted about his feeling for Hester. After all, there were certain conventions in such matters. "Mr. Hartley," he said, abruptly, "I'm sorry. The thing is impossible. It's indecent."

Hartley rose at once. Another of his maxims might have been never to betray irritation at failure. "Of course, if you begin talking about decency," he observed, grimly sarcastic, "there's no more to be said."

"I'm sorry," repeated Perrin.

"Not at all." His host moved to the bell beside the fireplace and rang it. "You've given me fair warning, and I must now make my own arrangements. It can't be helped."

"Of course," began the young man, "I fully realize——" He never finished his sentence, for on the instant the door flew open, rather as though someone without had been eagerly awaiting the signal of the bell, and Hester appeared. She stood looking from one to the other of the two men, flushed and anxious, but with a light in her eyes that her father at least had never seen there before. He winced from it.

"It was for Susan I rang," he said, irritably, "To show this—gentleman—out."

"I'll do that, father," said the girl. Their faces had told her nothing; but she turned to Perrin with a quick gesture of appeal. "Is it all right?" she asked.

"Aye," said Hartley, overhearing, "you do well to ask him that."

The young man did not answer, but Hester faced her father proudly. "If that means you've refused," she threw at him, "it doesn't make any difference." She turned to Perrin again. "I'll come if you want me," she said.

The man who had made love to her spoke then; his voice had lost its confidence, and sounded ashamed and broken. "I beg your pardon," he said.

"What for?" asked Hester, bewildered. "I don't understand."

But Perrin had met her eyes, and in the sight of them, so trustful and appealing, had taken a sudden resolution. His carefully controlled emotions had been stirred in a strange and unexpected manner. "You never shall," he said, meaningly. Then he strode past her towards old Hartley. "Mr. Hartley," he said, "I am in your hands. I take back all I said just now. I accept your conditions!" He glanced towards the girl again, seeing her changed and thrilling. No one had ever before looked at him like that.

"And that note-book?"

"Here it is."

The whisper, and the quick exchange of the book, were over in an instant. "Good!" said Hartley, aloud.

"Oh, father!" To Hester the word could have but one meaning; she turned upon her father a face transfigured with a great hope and astonishment. "Then you haven't refused?"

Hartley had all at once become the benevolent parent, beaming at his prospective son-in-law. "No," he said; "he—he over-persuaded me."

With more tenderness than he had yet shown, he laid his hands upon the girl's shoulders. "And you are fond enough of him to chance it?" he asked, gravely. "It's always a chance, remember."

Hester cast one look of pride upon her taciturn lover. "He made me fond of him," she confessed. "He could do anything. See how he got round you!"

Not a quiver betrayed her parent's secret and sardonic enjoyment of the irony of this challenge. "Yes," he said, "he has a wonderfully convincing tongue."

"By the way, Perrin," he added, "what's your Christian name?"

"It's George, father," volunteered Hester, shyly, as her lover still kept silent. She went close to him, and, glancing up at his set face, seemed to realize that something was amiss, for she ventured to slip her arm confidingly through his. After a moment Perrin's hand sought and found hers, crushing it in a grip so fierce that it pained her. But she welcomed the pain, for the strong clasp was in its way an embrace; though neither then nor afterwards did she know all that it meant of remorse and promise.

"Well, George," chuckled Hartley, whom nothing of this had escaped, "you'll stop and have some supper with us, of course!"

He turned, for at this moment the door opened again, and to the party of three, grouped thus, there entered Mrs. Hartley, flurried, sentimental, and intensely curious. Her husband greeted her with a shout of unexpected laughter.

"Mother," he said, pointing, "*this is George!*"

Deeds of Daring Performed for the Cinema.

MOVING-PICTURE ACTORS WHO RISK THEIR LIVES FOR THE SAKE OF A GOOD FILM.

By CLEVELAND MOFFETT.

Illustrated with Photographs from the Original Films.

IN the spring of 1913, while George and Ernest Williamson were in the West Indies, they made some motion-picture studies of a diver in a diver's suit, working at the bottom of the ocean, and George Williamson often posed for these pictures before a camera under the water.

In the manner of a professional, he put on the helmet and ponderous costume and descended to a convenient wreck while two natives pumped air to him down the hose—and had their own motion pictures taken at the same time. Unfortunately, the natives became so much interested in this picture-taking that at one moment they quite forgot to pump, thus leaving George Williamson fifty feet below the surface with no air to breathe. Had not Ernest seen the danger and leaped to the rescue, it is likely that George's career would have ended suddenly, for a diver's life goes out like a snuffed candle if the air-hose fails.

Motion-picture artists are often exposed to such dangers through carelessness. Thus, in the preparation of a recent photo-play, the hero, bound and gagged, was thrown by the villain into one of the great hydraulic presses used to squeeze bales of cotton. Of course, he was supposed to escape before the powerful jaws came together, and the negroes operating the press were cautioned to be careful; but they became so fascinated in watching the motion-picture man grinding at his machine that they allowed the huge press to close fully, and the hero was squeezed to a pancake, to the consternation of everyone, until it transpired, to the general relief, that a dummy hero had been used.

Another case was related to me by Harry Benham, a star of the Thanhouser Company, who was nearly killed a few months ago while posing in "A Man Without Fear," a thrilling melodrama, in the course of which he was imprisoned by Anarchists in the cabin of a coal barge, a real barge that lay at New Rochelle being used.

Having burst his bonds, Harry crept along the deck over piles of coal and finally, seeing no other way of escape, leaped upon a great steam coal-shovel that was just swinging its black load towards the shore; whereupon a Swede who was operating the derrick and hoisting machine, and who had been watching the pursuing bandits with bulging eyes, so far lost his self-possession that he pulled the releasing lever at the wrong moment, and suddenly Benham, at the top of his flight, felt the coal falling away beneath him and found himself dropping down with the load through the opened shovel scoops. Frantically he clung to the timbers above him and yelled to the Swede, who now, in his agitation, closed the scoops so violently that the actor's wriggling legs just missed being sheared off by the massive jaws.

Again, Benham found himself in a situation of unusual danger when he acted the hero in a photo-play at Niagara Falls, in the course of which a rival lover had to throw him over a stone wall that runs along beside the Whirlpool Rapids. William Russell was chosen to play the rival lover because of his immense strength—he stood six feet two inches and was as strong as a bull. Russell was supposed simply to drop Benham over the wall, the illusion being that the hero had fallen into the rapids, while really he was to fall on a narrow bank at the brink of the rapids. In his excitement, however, and his desire to give verisimilitude to his acting, Russell put

forth all his strength, and hurled the unfortunate hero clear over wall and bank into the plunging river.

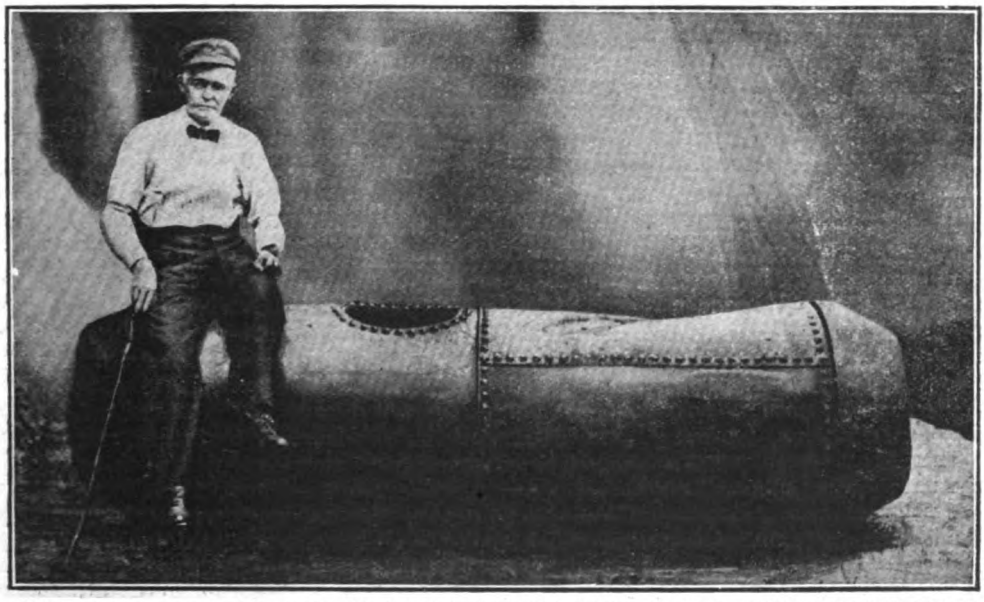
"I yelled like an Indian," said Benham, telling the story. "Fortunately, there was a rock near shore, and I clung to this until Russell could reach his legs out to me, fireman fashion, while another chap held Russell's hands and then pulled us both in. But, believe me, it was a close shave!"

Still again in a Niagara photo-play Benham had a narrow escape. His sweetheart was on an island above the Falls, where she was held a prisoner by bandits, but she managed to throw into the swift river a bottle containing an appeal for help, and she tied to this bottle her large hat, in the hope that it might attract attention.

Meantime, her artist lover (Benham) was standing below the Falls painting a picture. Over the thundering cataract came the bottle and hat, which swept on through the rage of waters until they caught the painter's eye, whereupon he, recognizing the tortured millinery of his beloved, pushed off into the furious flood, rescued the hat, found the message in the bottle, and ultimately saved the lady.

The point is that a motion-picture actor, with no particular skill or experience in these matters, rowed out alone in a little skiff to the foot of Niagara Falls and came back safely, a feat which the most venturesome boatman of the river might hesitate to undertake.

Many other motion-picture artists have had exciting experiences at Niagara Falls, but the film taken on July 25th, 1911, by Walter Arthur, veteran camera-man of the Vitagraph Company, easily ranks first as a record of dare-devil achievement here, since it shows the actual passage over the falls of Bobby Leach, the only man who ever performed this feat and lived to describe his sensations. And Bobby's description is rather vague;



BOBBY LEACH, THE MAN WHO WENT OVER NIAGARA FALLS IN THIS SPECIALLY-CONSTRUCTED BARREL, WHILE MOVING PICTURES OF THE WHOLE THING WERE MADE. IT WAS A TERRIBLY DANGEROUS ADVENTURE, RESULTING IN SMASHED KNEE-CAPS AND A BROKEN JAW.

Photo. Copyright 1911, by Bobby Leach.

since he was unconscious in his barrel during most of the trip.

For years before this great adventure Leach had followed an adventurous career as a showman and acrobat. He had made many balloon ascensions and had dropped often in a parachute, once from the height of two miles. He had dived from the great Suspension Bridge, two hundred and eight feet high, that spans Niagara River, and four times he had gone safely in a specially-constructed barrel through the Whirlpool Rapids, where Captain Webb lost his life. Finally, after years of hesitation, he made up his mind that it was possible for a man to go over the great cataract in a barrel and live, and, if so, he, Bobby Leach, was the man to do it. In vain

his friends and his wife (she ran a little restaurant near the Falls, on the Canadian side) tried to dissuade him. The thing could be done, he declared, and he was going to do it. At this time Leach was a white-haired man, well over fifty.

Bobby proceeded slowly and cautiously, sticking to his own ideas, regardless of what scientific men told him. For months he studied the river and the cataract, locating hidden rocks, estimating the strength of treacherous swirls and eddies, making himself as familiar as a man can be with this stupendous and mysterious torrent. His life depended upon knowledge not to be found in books, and Bobby knew it.

There were two things he could do to help his chances: he could provide the best kind of a barrel to carry him over the Falls, and he could select an advantageous point for launching this barrel. For weeks he experimented with kegs, beer barrels, and hogsheads, setting these adrift from various points in the river above the Falls, from the American side, from the Canadian side, from this or that island, and then following their tumultuous courses and drawing what conclusions he could from them. In some cases he placed animals in the barrels—a cat, a dog, or a chicken—to see if living creatures could go through that rage of waters and survive, but they never did.

This did not deter the enthusiast, however, and he proceeded to perfect his barrel, which was made of quarter-inch iron plates with a manhole on one side and a heavy iron cover that could be bolted in place after Bobby was inside, so as to make the craft watertight. Near one end was a hole about an inch in diameter, stopped up by a champagne cork with a nail driven through it and a cord tied to the nail so that Bobby could pull the cork out from the inside and perhaps get a little air if he found himself suffocating. As a matter of fact, he never touched this cork during the swift journey, because he fainted away when the barrel took its great plunge.

"We had a lively time taking those motion pictures," said Mr. Arthur. "In the first place we had to dodge the police, who wanted to arrest Leach on the charge of attempted suicide. Then the big crowd bothered us—there were thousands watching along the banks—and we had to be everlastingly quick to catch the barrel as it came over the Falls. We didn't know exactly which way to aim our camera.

"At the start they towed the barrel out from a little island on the Canadian side about a mile above the cataract. Bobby was inside, with pillows at one end of the barrel to protect his head, and a harness of three-inch webbing strapped around him so that his body would be held suspended away from the sides of the barrel.

"I was stationed on the bank at the bottom of the Falls with my motion picture machine ready, and I don't mind saying that I never expected to see Bobby Leach again. Suddenly I saw the black shape of the barrel with its sharp wooden nose poised on the brink. It hung there a few seconds before it plunged down a hundred and sixty-eight feet to the river below. The barrel was about nine feet long and three feet across, and it must have weighed five hundred pounds. Leach had built out blunt wooden noses of heavy timbers, bolted fast to the iron ends of the barrel. The idea was that these wooden noses would act as buffers against the rocks, and prevent them from smashing holes in the ends.

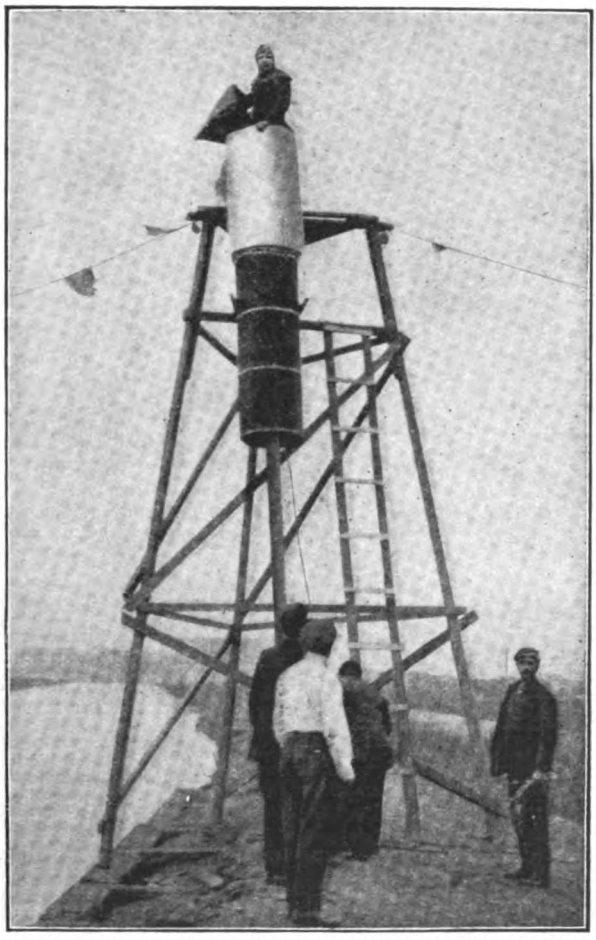
"As it turned out, this was a good idea, and probably saved Leach's life, for after its big drop the barrel struck nose on, and the blow tore away most of the planks at both ends. After the first crash at the bottom of the Falls Bobby says the barrel stayed on end for over half a minute, and he thought it was wedged in the rocks at the bottom of the river, and would stay there. This is when he fainted.

"We were waiting at a point where the control barrels had floated. We thought he would come out here, but he did not come. A minute passed, two minutes, and we searched the smooth, black surface where the *Maid of the Mist* was lying ready to help. Nothing! Three minutes! It seemed like hours, and then, a little distance off from the shore, we made out the black shape of the barrel sweeping on towards the rapids. Everybody yelled, and a big strapping fellow from the fire-house leaped into the river and struck out bravely. We saw him swim up to the barrel, throw one arm over it, and turn struggling towards the shore. Then two other young fellows rushed in, and among them they brought the barrel to the bank.

"All this time I was grinding out motion pictures, and I recorded on the film how they opened the manhole and worked over Bobby with stimulants, and finally unstrapped him and got him out on a stretcher. Then we packed up our apparatus and made a hasty departure, for the authorities were after us. Poor Bobby spent weeks in the hospital, with both knee-caps smashed and a broken jaw. He said he broke it against the inside handle of the manhole."

Another camera artist who has had many adventures in motion-picture work is Carl Gregory, veteran camera-man of the Thanhouser Company.

"One of the first big motion-picture feats I remember," he said, "was when we sent a White steam motor-car at full speed over the steepest part of the Palisades and let her smash down with a wicked nobleman inside (played by a dummy), a scoundrel who had choked and beaten his young and beautiful American wife, and had fiercely pursued her when she was rescued by a gallant American lover in his car. There were five operators with cameras ready waiting for the smash-up, one man at the top of the Palisades to get the car as she toppled over the precipice, and four of us down at the bottom on the shore of the Hudson River with our machines pointed up at various steep angles. When we heard the director shout we began turning our machines, and each one of us got a section of the fall. We had filled up the motor's tank with gasolene, in the hope that she would explode in the air as she turned over, and sure enough she did. I got a picture showing the automobile shooting straight out from the rock wall, then turning a clean somersault, then, with a smash of black smoke, blowing herself into a thousand pieces. One of these, a heavy chunk of steel, whizzed by my head and buried itself in the ground. We gave the wreck to a policeman, who sold it for forty dollars.



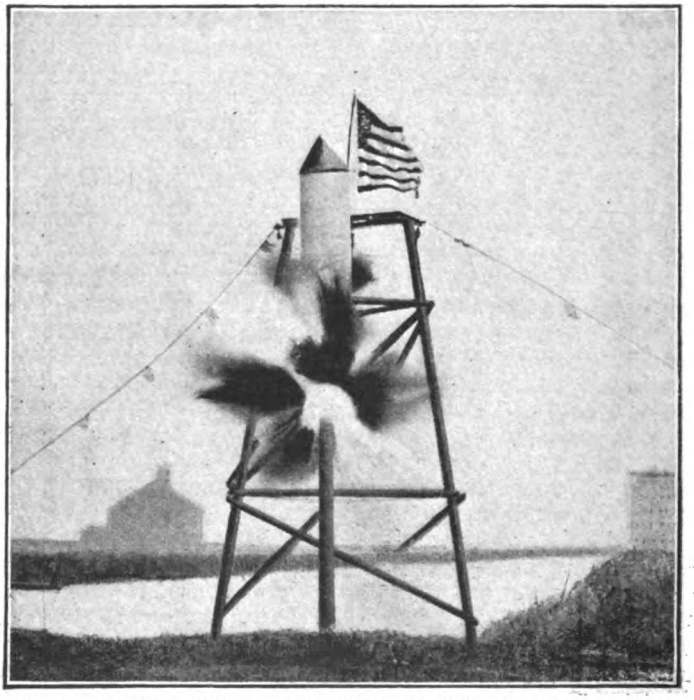
FAMOUS IN MOVING-PICTURE SENSATIONS IS RODMAN LAW, WHO IS HERE ABOUT TO BE SHOT INTO THE AIR IN A MONSTER SKY-ROCKET.

"That reminds me of another precipice act that we did while I was with the Edison Company," continued Gregory. "This time a real man leaped off a cliff over forty feet high straight down into a river, and a real horse leaped with him. The horse was a very intelligent animal named Don Fulavo. He could open a door and count up to ten and take off his master's coat and shine his shoes —in fact, he was an educated horse, and had been on the stage in vaudeville. We had used Don Fulavo in several photo-plays, and once he liberated other horses from a burning stable and then rang the fire-bell.

"In this precipice play he was supposed to be the pet horse of a girl who had been captured by bandits, and was tied to a tree while the villains ate their dinner. Don Fulavo waited his chance, picked up a revolver in its holster, and sidestepped over to the lady and untied her bonds with his teeth. Then she leaped on his back, held up the bandits with the pistol, made them return stolen papers, and dashed off, with the men after her on their horses.

"Now came the leap, when the girl, hard pressed along a steep cliff, suddenly turned her horse towards the precipice and plunged madly into the river below. It was a real river and a real cliff, at Little Falls, New Jersey, but the girl was changed at the last moment for a professional jockey in woman's clothes, who was paid two hundred dollars to do the thing. Don Fulavo had been

trained in high dives at Coney Island, and all would have gone well but for one thing. The cliff was not quite perpendicular at the point where the leap was to be made, and it had been built out for a better effect by means of a scaffolding covered with canvas and painted to represent rock. As Don Fulavo gathered himself for his long plunge the timbers gave way, and horse and rider were whirled down into the gulf, the jockey falling under the animal, so that two of his ribs were broken when he struck the water. This happened in December when the river was full of ice, and the poor chap nearly perished with cold before he was rescued, but Don Fulavo came out all right."



INSIDE THIS SKY-ROCKET WAS RODMAN LAW, WHO INTENDED TO COME DOWN IN A PARACHUTE. READ IN THE ARTICLE WHAT HAPPENED.

Famous in the records of motion-picture sensations are the achievements of Rodman Law, parachute-leaper and general dare-devil, who, about two years ago, startled the country by announcing that he would have himself shot up to a great height inside of a monster sky-rocket, and then come down to earth by means of a parachute. Early in 1913 experiments were begun on the outskirts of Jersey City, where a cat and a dog, provided with self-acting parachutes, were fired to a height of several hundred feet in small rockets and landed safely; the cat, scared, ran away, while the dog seemed to enjoy it. Encouraged by these trials, Law had a rocket built about twelve feet long and three feet in diameter, with a pole of timber four inches square to serve as a stick. In the head of the rocket was a *papier-mâché* washtub for Law to stand in, and under this, inside the big tube, was packed five feet of sand and mud dug up from the Newark meadows. Finally, at the bottom of the tube was placed a barrel of powder, with an extra half-barrel added at the last moment by the Italian manufacturer, who wished to make sure that there was enough explosive force to lift this human projectile. There was.

At last, after hours of waiting, the critical moment came—it was a raw day in March—and a great crowd gathered along the Newark plank road near the canal thrilled as the Italian lighted a twenty-foot fuse, while Rodman Law, at the peak of the rocket and apparently quite calm, stood ready to begin his aerial flight. Mrs. Law, who had just kissed her husband good-bye, watched in terror near the foot of the scaffolding, and a big policeman prophesied that the rocket would land in Elizabeth, New Jersey, ten

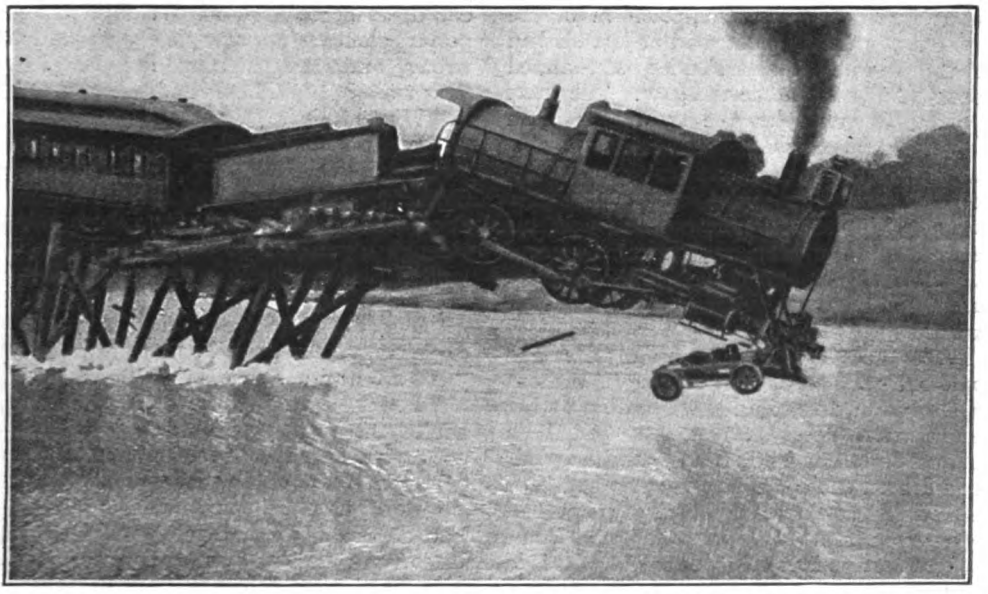
miles distant—he said it was aimed exactly in that direction.

Meantime, J. Alexander Leggett, the camera-man for Pathé Frères, was grinding away at his motion-picture machine. Presently the explosion came, a shattering blast that flattened out heavy bill-boards in all directions and caused such a volume of smoke that it was impossible to tell how high the rocket went. Law himself was half dazed when he was dragged forth from the wreckage. It seems the Italian had packed in so much powder that the restraining side timbers had been blown out laterally and the whole rocket had collapsed. The young man himself, by some miracle, suffered only bruises, and, as soon as he was rescued, proceeded fiercely to upbraid the firework-maker for his inefficiency.

The readiness of motion-picture artists to risk their lives for the sake of a good film was illustrated a few months ago, when Earle Williams, Rose Duggan, Mary Green, and Charles Edwards, members of the Vitagraph Company, actually went down in the last desperate throes of real drowning and were dragged out of the water unconscious while the camera-man clicked on with his thrilling record. This occurred when a fully-equipped express train, a locomotive and three cars running at high speed and loaded with passengers, including the beautiful daughter of the wicked president of the road, were made to plunge off a trestle at South River, New Jersey, into the lake below.

It was a wonderful wreck. The cars stood on end as the timbers crumpled up beneath them, the locomotive dived head first into the depths, and exploded with a great roaring and hissing and a scattering of bolts and iron fragments like shrapnel. Then, at the director's word, forty Vitagraph artists, replacing the dummies in the cars, threw themselves, fully dressed, into the cold waters of the lake and swam (literally) for their lives.

And presently the crowd that had gathered on the banks to witness this rather expensive simulation of disaster had an extra sensation, when Victor Smith, superintendent of the studios, and Joseph Curran, chief electrician, with shouts of genuine alarm, leaped to the rescue of several actors and actresses who had volunteered for this perilous work without being sure they were equal to it.



THIS WRECK, WHICH WAS PLANNED AND EXECUTED FOR THE CINEMATOGRAPH, OCCURRED AT SOUTH RIVER, NEW JERSEY, WHERE A WHOLE TRAIN, LOADED WITH DUMMIES, WAS RUN OFF A TRESTLE INTO A LAKE. WHEN THE CARS FELL INTO THE WATER, FORTY MOVING-PICTURE ACTORS JUMPED IN AND, TAKING THE PLACES OF THE DUMMIES SWAM FOR THEIR LIVES. SOME OF THESE ACTORS HAD TO BE REALLY RESCUED—BECAUSE THEY HAD OVER-ESTIMATED THEIR ABILITY TO SWIM!

Photo. C. C. Cook, N.Y.

En Route.

By PHILIP PRESCOTT FROST.

Illustrated by Arthur William Brown.

AT two minutes past nine on that June morning twelve years ago two gentlemen stood in the train-shed of the old Grand Central Station and regarded each other with widely-differing emotions. Between them an iron gate had just been closed and locked. Mr. Addison Gaylord Brown, on the observation-platform of the White Mountain Express, had at last shaken off the pursuit of the slender, sun-tanned young man just outside the gate. The train was due to start. In the train Miss Ruth Brown remained serenely unaware of this pursuit. Mr. Brown settled his short, stocky frame firmly in one of the convenient wicker chairs and pulled his golf cap low over his keen eyes. The platform began to move. The incident being thus closed, he indulged himself in a grimly humorous smile at the expense of the loser.

Dare Williams did not smile. He had come half-way across the continent, without an invitation, to attend a celebration at her college. His notes and flowers had been ignored or intercepted, from some functions he had been excluded, at others he had been ignored or avoided. No opportunity had been given him to learn what had come between him and his one-time *confidante*. Had it been anyone else on earth, his pride would have ended the matter. There was an emotion involved, however, stronger even than Dare Williams's pride. He had trailed them up over the Pennsylvania railway to New York, had lost the trail and found it again, and now was thwarted by a locked gate, a mere matter of seconds. With all northern New England in which to search for them, limited both as to time and money, he was beaten. He saw the taunting smile, understood, as he had not understood before, that her father was actively opposed to him, and, in the abject misery of her loss, forgot to resent it at all. He felt, as he saw the train recede down the vista of tracks and empty platforms, that not even Addison Gaylord Brown, who notoriously married for money, would have done this if he had fully understood.

"Carry your bag, sir?" It was a station porter. Williams looked down at him, dazed, as he stooped for the luggage. The porter, glancing up, saw that something was wrong, and, straightening, asked, "Missed your train?" Williams nodded.

"Where to?"

"White Mountains."

"Quick—this way! The nine-four!" Catching up the suit-case, the porter bolted down along the line of the iron fence, dodged through a gate which was just closing, and landed him, bag and baggage, on the rear car of a train.

"Missed the White Mountain train," he explained to the guard as the train moved. "It's a ten to one shot, but it's a chance."

"Better 'n that," said the guard, and hauled the passenger to safety as the station porter quickened his pace to keep alongside. "They're due at New Haven nine minutes ahead of us, but sometimes when they're loaded extra heavy, we get there first. Such times you can just drop off and wait for 'em to come along. Of course, you have to take a chance on it, but it isn't a bad gamble." The porter ignored a proffered coin, and dropped off with a frank smile and a genial, "Better luck next time, sir!"

Their spontaneous friendliness touched Williams the more that it was in such vivid contrast with his experiences of the last few days. Moreover, it had replaced defeat with a fighting chance. He picked up his suit-case and went inside to find a seat, and presently the guard joined him with a time-table and more information.

"This is the Boston Express, you see. That White Mountain train pulls out just two minutes ahead of us, and we pass 'em at 125th Street—they stop, and we don't—and then it's nip an' tuck on parallel tracks all the way to New Haven. It's four track all the way, you know, so each train has one clear. Our three regular stops are their flags, and when they have to stop, too, it makes a pretty even thing of it. We used to get held up at New Haven every other day by their being late, but now the first one to get the block outside of New Haven goes in ahead, and has the right-of-way over the double-track line from there to Springfield. If they can't keep within nine minutes of schedule, we take the line ahead of them, and they have to hold back for us."

The aching alternation of light and smoky darkness in the tunnel at length gave place to steadily-brightening daylight, and as the train climbed out of the open cut and the windows began to go up, the two stepped to the rear door. As they whipped across 125th Street, sure enough, there was the White Mountain train standing at the platform, unmistakable by reason of two Boston and Maine day-coaches. The engine hissed by, receded, and could just be seen to be getting under way as it was lost to view. The race was on.

The guard went to turn out the lights in the car, and then, for a few minutes, they stood in the rear door and watched the blur of road-bed shoot back, resolve itself into cross-ties and rock ballast for an instant, and then drop into distance. They were on the outside track of the four, and occasionally a signal-post would flash by, one arm rising to "danger" behind them, and the other giving a clear track to the engineer of the White Mountain Express. When a long stretch of straight track had lined itself out behind, they would strain their eyes to catch a glimpse of the train following, and, as the inevitable curve shut out the view at last, they would crane their necks to keep the far-away point in sight as long as possible. Then would come a letting down of the tension, a consulting of watches, and a little chatting about the probable length of their lead. When the straight track had lengthened out into two or three miles, they began again to watch, until, finally, just as the car struck a curve, the great locomotive of the pursuer shot into view far behind, swung head on, and was blotted out as its last cars were just disappearing in its wake.

"Here she comes!"

"Get the time, and let's see how much we're ahead, somebody."

"What's the excitement all about?" The passengers were beginning to wake up to what was going on and were getting interested. The guard explained, and then all grew quiet and watched. One minute was gone, two minutes, two minutes and thirty seconds, thirty-five, forty, forty-five seconds, and then:—

"There she is again! Hurrah! Look at her come!"

"How much do you make it?"

"Two minutes and three-quarters must mean about three miles, doesn't it?"

"Only about two and a half at the rate we're going," replied the guard. "This is about a fifty-mile-an-hour clip we're doing now, I think; we average forty, including stops."

The next time they caught sight of the other train it had crept up fully half a mile on them by the watches. As they stood there, crowding the rear platform, timepieces in hand, it became evident that the heavier train was rapidly cutting down their lead. At every curve the pursuer showed a gain, and it almost seemed as though the greater weight was an advantage when once the train was under way. Minute by minute the distance grew less until the two miles were cut down to one, and that, in turn, was reduced to a fraction of itself. Hardly would the other train be lost sight of around a curve when, suddenly, the big boiler would sweep into view again, and come rushing after on the second track. Capped with its plume of smoke, vibrating with power, and sparkling in the sun, it was an awe-inspiring sight, and as it crept up on them, looming higher and higher in air, all talking ceased on the rear platform.

Then the great machine, with its flying wheels and roaring exhaust, lay pitching less than a car's length behind, its driver bent forward, straining to catch some glimpse of the flying track and signals through the volley of dust and cinders from the train in front. The group on the rear steps of the Boston Express all at once realized that they were being overhauled, and cheered and laughed, and dared the White Mountain driver to pass them if he could—all save one. Williams clung to the hand-rail and watched in anxious silence.

As the mammoth engine crept slowly, inch by inch nearer, overlapped the platform, and still moved up until one could have reached out and touched the spinning six-foot drivers

"SHE SAT VERY QUIETLY, LOOKING AT HIM INTENTLY."

or shaken hands with the fireman, swinging steadily between fire-door and coal, the whole world swept back in a riotous avalanche of dust and sound and flying houses, bridges, track, and forest. The tender jolted past, and then, as the luggage-van crept slowly by, the cinders danced on its roof and eddied down into their faces. In its turn came a combination luggage and smoker, and as the smoker crept up to the crowded rear platform racing beside it, the occupants with one accord dropped their newspapers and cards and crowded to the windows.

"What train is that?" "Hurry up there! you're getting left!" "We'll tell 'em we saw you," came faintly across, above the roar of the trains. Down the line of the White Mountain Express the attendants were on the steps of the cars, the vestibules open, and, as the five day-coaches passed slowly in review, window by window, car by car, steadily, inevitably, the young man watched in vain for a familiar face. With the appearance of the first car he had realized that he was to have the privilege of seeing Ruth Brown again, of looking her squarely in the face at close range, and that, wedged into the crowd on the platform as he was, he would be obliged also to see, and be seen by, her father. They were not in the day-coaches; so he scanned the windows of the Pullmans with added expectancy.

The first and second of the Pullmans passed slowly and uneventfully by, then the third; and so they reached the rear car, and the two trains ran side by side. Up ahead, the driver of the White Mountain Express was forcing the locomotive of his eleven-car train past the locomotive of the ten-car Boston Express, himself already abreast its boiler as those on the rear platform crept down his last Pullman, and for the first time the Boston driver realized that he was being distanced, that the coveted right-of-way might be in danger. The White Mountain engine was doing its very utmost, had been doing its best for half an hour; but the other still had a little in reserve, and so it happened that just as Williams found himself looking into the surprised eyes of the girl of his choice, the Boston Express gradually increased its speed, and the two trains became relatively stationary, with her window hardly three feet from his face.

She sat very quietly, looking at him intently—a little wistfully, he thought—questioningly, as though she would ask, "Why are you here?" The double windows of the Pullman and the din of the trains made speech hopelessly impossible, but it seemed to him that he must cry out and answer her question, tell her that it was by no mere chance that he was there, tell her why, with all its inevitableness, he had come. He knew that he might never see her again, that in a moment she might slip from him, never to be overtaken.

Perhaps the strangely familiar sight of her reminded him—perhaps the urgent need of it—of an incident of the old days. They had lived within less than a block of each other on opposite sides of the avenue, and her window had been in sight from his own. Once when she had been quarantined after an illness he had watched for her with his telescope, and when she had come to her window, had attracted her attention. She, too, had obtained a glass, and they had spent many happy hours spelling out messages by means of the deaf-and-dumb alphabet, reading them with the aid of their telescopes. It had been slow, but it had served them once, and it might again. Looping an arm through the hand-rail to steady himself, and trying not to attract the attention of those about him, he began. It helped that the crowd on the rear platform was thinning.

"I missed your train, so took this slower one," he spelled. "I have something to say to you."

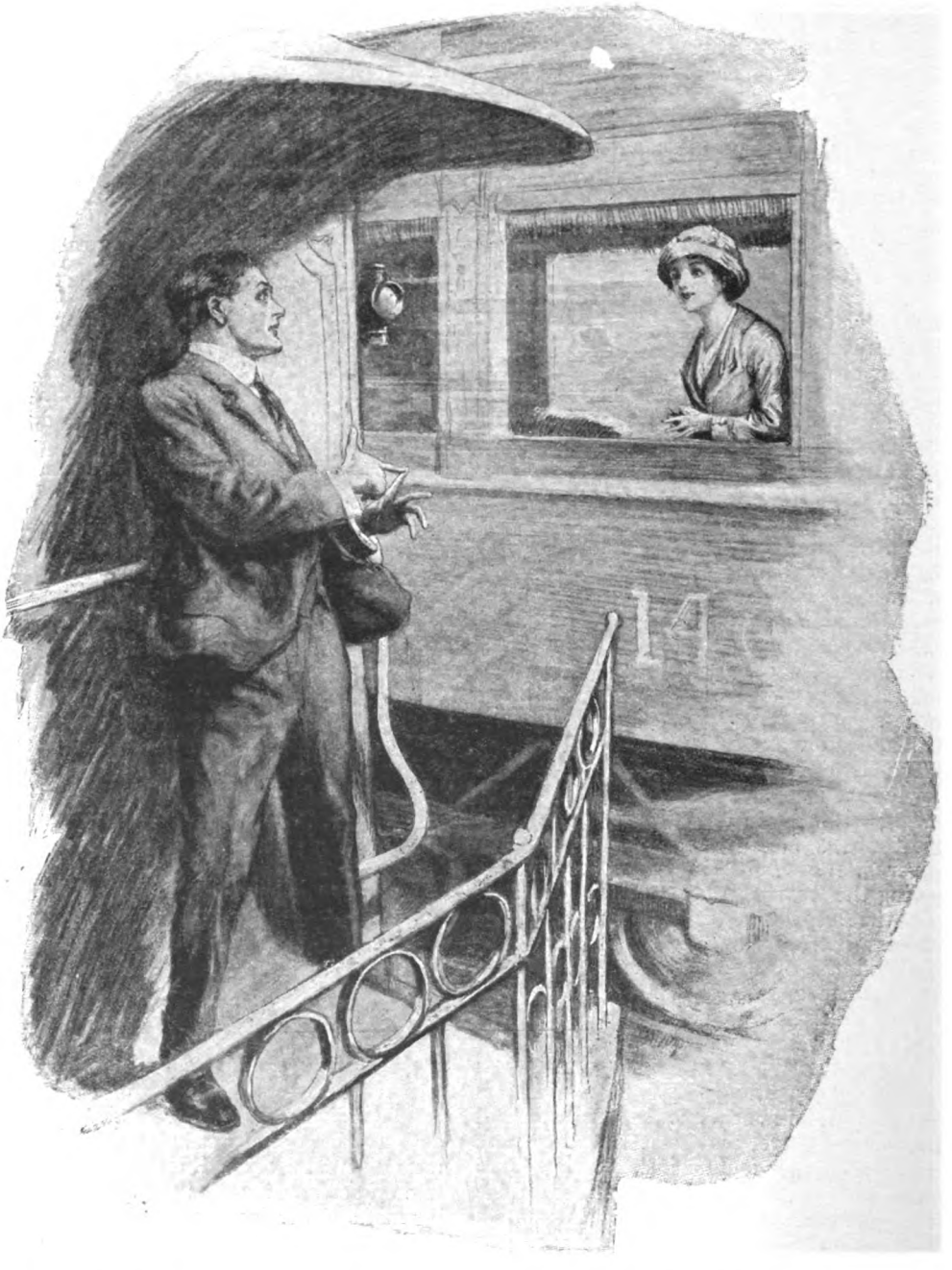
Her eyes lingered on his hands for an instant after he had finished, then came swiftly to his own. Warm colour had come to her face. There was a light in her eyes; she leaned towards him. Her hands fluttered together as though to reply, and then she drew back, and only looked at him searchingly.

"Where can I find you?" he begged. "Please, Ruth, dear!"

She frowned, bit her lip, paled, shook her head, and raised her eyes unwillingly to his own, and he saw that her eyes were bright again, and just then the Boston train began to pull ahead. Before she could answer, she had drifted back and back, and was gone.

The car lengthened out window by window, and as the open vestibule came past, an insane impulse seized him to try to swing himself across. Even as the thought entered his mind, the trains leaped apart on a curve, a gulf of death yawned between, and he found himself clinging weakly to his hand-rail. He looked up and saw her looking at him as from a great height, with terror in her eyes. When the trains came together again, he was half-way down the second car, and she was gone.

When it became evident that the Boston



"'I MISSED YOUR TRAIN, SO TOOK THIS SLOWER ONE,' HE SPELLED. 'I HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO YOU.'"

train was again taking the lead, the crowd stampeded back, and Williams found himself caught on the platform and obliged to witness the reverse of the former review. The White Mountain train lost ground rapidly as the lighter train increased its speed, until at last they read the number on the front of the big boiler. When it was a mile in the rear it seemed quite out of the race. At Stamford the Boston train was just starting as the other came in. It seemed too bad not to improve the opportunity of crossing to the White Mountain train, but the guard dissuaded him.

"You might not be able to get over to that track in time, or you might not be able to get on if you did get there, and you never know sure that they'll stop. You'd feel sick to see this train out of sight and then have them go humming through."

At South Norwalk he went out on the rear platform and watched again. On they came, and when the engine was about two hundred yards away, he suddenly realized that this time they were not going to stop. The last hundred feet was covered almost in the tick of a watch, and, with a crash and a roar, a leaping succession of car bodies, and a blinding, choking swirl of dust, the White Mountain Express took the lead. Leaning out beyond the side of the train, he saw its observation end disappear around the next curve. His own train was already getting under way, but with exasperating slowness.

Dare Williams went into the car and sat down. The rear platform had suddenly become the most boresomely uninteresting place in the world; the clear sunlight and the sharp blue of the sky were bleak. To lose had been hard. He had met with nothing but defeat until this morning, but so nearly to win and then to lose seemed worse. He had little hope that the other train could be beaten now, and he knew Ruth Brown too well to imagine that she would aid him unduly in his pursuit. He did not feel sure that she would aid him at all. He had no way of knowing how much or how little her looks might have meant. Still less could he know what reaction of feeling might since have come. Driven by his uneasiness, he presently left the rear car and went forward to the front of the smoker.

The White Mountain Express won the race to Bridgeport. Track elevation work was in progress there, and as his train crept in over the single rough, temporary track, Williams several times caught glimpses of the crowded observation-platform of the other train just ahead. It paused at the station while they waited outside, and then moved on to make place for them. As they were pulling out in their turn, a district messenger came through, calling Williams's name. He paid the boy and took the letter, addressed to him in her hand and written on the stationery of the train.

WHITE MOUNTAIN EXPRESS
en route

DEAR MR. WILLIAMS,—If necessary, this train will be delayed so that you may reach New Haven first. I shall be glad to hear what you have to say We go through on this car to Bretton Woods. Sincerely,
R. B.

Williams read this note four times. It did not strike him as a cold or a formal missive. It gave him everything that he had asked. He read far more between the lines than he would have cared to have had her put in words. It left him a little overwhelmed. When he started to read it the fifth time he suddenly grasped the import of her first sentence: "If necessary, this train will be delayed." How? Money would not hold a crack train back ten minutes, he felt sure. He suddenly saw his air-castles in ruins again; she simply could not do it. Slouching his hat over his eyes, he went out on the front platform and peered out from behind the sheltering corner of the baggage-car.

The observation-platform of the leading train flew on and on, effortless, not fifty feet before him. Slowly it was conquered, crept past him yet more slowly, and Mr. Addison Gaylord Brown, at his ease, looked at the man on the open platform beside him, tossed this way and that, buffeted by fierce gusts, smothered by dust and cinders, and did not recognize him. His daughter, who had not left the writing-desk since entrusting her note to the porter, smiled instant recognition. When she drifted beyond him, Williams entered the car and strolled back down the train, keeping always opposite her.

The conditions below Stamford were, however, now exactly reversed. The White Mountain driver, looking back, saw that he was threatened, and dropped his lever another notch. The driver of the Boston Express had already done his utmost, and could not answer the spurt. Williams saw her window hesitate, cease to fall behind, begin to drift the other way. At a run he reached the next platform ahead, and, as she came past, answered her look of inquiry with a shake of the head. It was the signal she awaited. With a sober little nod she rose briskly from her chair, looked quickly about the empty car, gathered her skirts daintily, and stepped, like the lady that she was, upon the chair, grasped the

"IN THE INSTANT HE KNEW THAT HE HAD NO RIGHT TO SPEAK, YET THAT HE MUST SPEAK."

emergency-brake cord with one small hand, and pulled.

Her window paused decisively in its advance; again drifted toward him; hurried by, with a glimpse of her flung in a heap on the writing-desk; the next vestibule leaped past; and then, windows, vestibules, cars, and engine, the White Mountain Express volleyed itself towards the rear like an avalanche. With a grinding of brakes and a whistling of air it fell from them, and, half a mile ahead, the signal outside New Haven opened the way for the slower Boston train. The miracle had been done.

Six minutes later Williams hurried down the New Haven platform to meet the incoming White Mountain Express, almost unnerved by conflicting hopes and fears. He had hoped for this hour so long, so vainly, and now it was upon him, not to be put away. If he spoke the right word, made no misstep, heaven might open before him. If he made a mistake, he knew that it would be the end.

The great engine rolled down the platform with ponderous swing of massive connecting-rods and slow *clang. clang* of bell. The open luggage-doors passed swiftly by, men waiting in them ready for the stop; vestibules passed with their freight of waiting passengers; and as the last cars approached, the spurting fire from the wheels grew sharper, and the train came heavily to rest.

Williams stood in the crowd about the steps of the two rear cars as the incoming passengers disembarked. The pounding of his heart suffocated him. His throat was dry. He did not know what he should say, what he could do. He was no ladies' man, he was not even a "gentleman" any more in the sense that he was familiar with the ways of the rich and socially secure. He was only just an honest man in love. What chance had he?

The last arriving passenger was off; those on the station platform began to climb the steps of the Pullman. His turn was coming.

Someone touched his arm; he turned, and looked straight into the eyes of the girl he sought: the cool, clear, level eyes which always saw straight to his soul. In the instant he knew that he had no right to speak, yet that he must speak.

"Ruth," he said, and it was to the girl of the other years, straight across as though nothing had since been; "Ruth, I haven't made my fortune, but—if you can wait—I can't forget!"

Suddenly her eyes shone with a wonderful light, and her hand touched his arm again, and was gone.

"I thought I had, Dare—but I haven't."

Dare Williams came back to earth, and he stood on a railway platform, his suit-case still in his hand, with the steps of a Pullman before him. Ruth was by his side, was to remain at his side while he lived. Reality was to take on the colour of dreams. He was happy, and he was terribly afraid—afraid that, after all, this could not be; afraid that he might not be a man wise and strong enough for the *rôle* he had undertaken.

"Dare Williams, isn't it?" Her father gripped his hand as he climbed aboard, and, looking up into the keen eyes, he saw that they were not unfriendly. The father had seen. His daughter had chosen, and, like many parents before him, he had quietly put away his own plans and hopes for her and pledged himself to do all in his power to ensure the success of her plan. If Dare Williams it was to be, Dare Williams he would back to the last ditch, fighting for him as wholeheartedly as he had fought against him. Dare saw it, realized vaguely that this man was not defeated, but had changed sides, and felt a strange moving of the heart towards him. Unselfish as he knew his own love for Ruth to be, he realized that her father's love for her was even more unselfish, and in his success he was humbled, and in such humbleness he began to perceive the possibilities of the way upon which he had entered.

"By OUR READERS."

On page 222 will be found our Confession-Book, which this month has been submitted to lady artists, who have supplied answers in pictures to the six questions proposed.

It has occurred to us that our lady readers might like to contribute to this section, and we shall be pleased to receive from any of them a page similar to those given.

Male readers may do the same by replying to the following six questions, to which answers have already been supplied by well-known artists in our two previous numbers: (1) What is your ideal of a pretty girl? (2) Your ideal of a well-dressed woman? (3) What is the easiest animal to draw? (4) Who is the easiest man to caricature? (5) An optimist and a pessimist? (6) Your pet aversion? Payment will be made for contributions accepted.

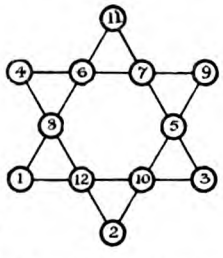
Details of another "By Our Readers" invitation will be found on page 238.

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

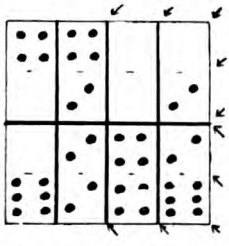
261.—A STAR PUZZLE.

STAR puzzles have of late been creating some interest in the United States, and this fact suggests to me that readers may be entertained by an old one to which I will give a new "twist." It is a six-pointed star, in which the numbers 1 to 12 are to be placed so that every line of four adds up 26. In the example given it will be noticed that the six numbers at the points of the star add up 30, and there is only one other way in which this may occur (exchange 4 with 6, 7 with 9, 1 with 3, and 12 with 10, and you will get the second arrangement). Now, the puzzle is to rearrange the numbers so that the six points, as well as every line of four, shall add up 26. There are very few ways of doing it. Perhaps the reader can find them all.



262.—A NEW DOMINO PUZZLE.

TAKE eight dominoes from an ordinary box and so arrange them in a square that every column, row, and line parallel with the diagonals shall contain an even number of pips. The example I give fulfils this condition, as in all the directions the pips add up to an even number. The arrows will make clear what I mean by the diagonal directions. It will be found that there are 38 pips in all in the square. The puzzle is to comply with the conditions while using as few pips as possible. Remember that there must be an even number of pips in every direction and that 0 is not a number.



263.—A CRYPTIC SIGN-BOARD.

AN officer in the Royal Engineers, writing to me from "somewhere in France," says: "While on service in France I have come across a quaint inn sign, as below, which I think you may consider worthy of a place among your 'Perplexities'" :—

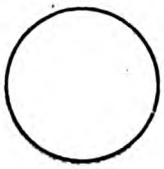
ESTAMINET

0 20 . 100 0

As the letter is stamped "Passed by Censor," it is clear that the official was satisfied as to the innocent nature of the cryptogram. Would the sign have puzzled you?

264.—THE COIN AND HOLE.

I HAVE before me a specimen of every current British coin from a farthing up to a sovereign. And I have a sheet of paper with a circular hole cut in it of exactly the size of the circle shown. What is the largest coin I can pass through that hole without tearing the paper?



Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

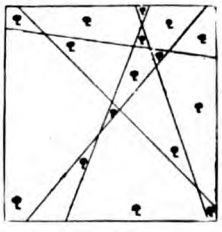
256.—THE 37 PUZZLE GAME.

THE first player (A) can always win, but he must lead with 4. The winning scores to secure during the play are 4, 11, 17, 24, 30, 37. In the first game below the second player (B) puts off defeat as long as possible. In the second game he prevents A scoring 17 or 30, but has to give him 24 and 37. In the third game he prevents A scoring 11 or 24, but has to give him 17, 30, and 37. Notice the important play of the 3 and the 5.

A	B	A	B	A	B
4	1 (*a*)	4	1	4	1
3	1 (*b*)	3	1	3	4
(11) 2	1	(11) 2	3 (*d*)	(17) 5	1
(17) 5	1 (*c*)	5	1	3	4
3	2	(24) 4	3 (*e*)	(30) 5 (*f*)	1
(24) 1	2	5	1	3	1
(30) 4	1	(37) 4		(37) 2	
3	2				
(37) 1					

(*a*) Or A will score 11 next move. (*b*) B could not prevent A scoring 11 or 17 next move. (*c*) Again to prevent A immediately scoring 24. (*d*) Preventing A scoring 17, but giving him 24. (*e*) Preventing A scoring 30, but giving him the 37. (*f*) Thus A can always score 24 (as in the last game) or 30 (as in this), either of which commands the winning 37.

257.—THE FIVE FENCES.



THE illustration explains itself.

258.—THE BEHEADED DIGNITARY.

PRELATE — RELATE — ELATE — LATE — ATE.

259.—A MILITARY KNOT.

THE sentence, when completed, reads as follows: "The Germans' *object* was undoubtedly to capture *Warsaw*, but those who had closely followed the *war saw* that Russia might quite reasonably *object* to this plan."

260.—THE WEIGHING-MACHINE FRAUD.

CALL the children A, B, C, D, E, in order of their weights, A being the lightest and E the heaviest. It is clear that A and B (the lightest) together weigh 114lb., and D and E (the heaviest) 129lb., and these four weigh 243lb., which, deducted from the weight of all five, 303lb., gives us the weight of C—60lb. (To obtain the 303lb., add all the pairs together and divide by 4, since every child was weighed four times.) The lightest and next lightest but one weighed 115lb., that is A and C, so if we deduct the 60lb. we have also the weight of A—55lb. The rest is now quite easy, and the children weighed respectively 55lb., 59lb., 60lb., 63lb., and 66lb.

SAM BRIGGS BECOMES A SOLDIER.

VIII.—Sanctuary.

By RICHARD MARSH.

Illustrated by Charles Pears.

WHAT surprised me about war was that you seldom seemed to know what was going on. If you were a private soldier you might have been in the Battle of Waterloo without knowing it for goodness only knows how long afterwards. I was in the Battle of Battery Hill without being aware of it till afterwards, when I came upon an old newspaper with the headline, "Battle of Battery Hill—Twelfth Day." It was only when I began to read that I realized I was reading about the fight on the slope of which I had had rather more than I quite cared for. I had never guessed it was a regular battle—and doubt if any of us chaps in the ranks did.

After Ormiston had blown up that battery on the very first night of its existence, the Germans never stopped trying to get it back again. I don't mean the battery itself; that couldn't be done, since there was nothing of it left, but the ground on which it had stood. They never gave us any peace, day and night.

Most of our time was spent in a series of trenches which had been dug amongst a lot of bushes which were so tall as almost to reach to the dignity of trees. The Germans seemed to pass their time in finding out just where we were. When they had located us—or thought they had—they began to pepper us with shells, or shrapnel, or stuff of that sort. We could do nothing in return, having nothing with which to reply. At the back of the trench in which I spent most of my time the ground was dug away so as to form a shelter which was practically bomb-proof; but I give you my word that it is not pleasant to be in such a place for hour after hour, or perhaps day after day, hoping that none of the would-be visitors would intrude themselves too closely.

But I don't think for a single hour was the fighting really stopped. The chap who put our trench where it was knew what he was up to. We did hear that the guns which were attacking us were five or six miles off, some of them more; even at that distance they kept us on the jump. There came a time when they did a good deal more. It is queer to me how, in a position like that, one side finds out what the other is about to be up to; long before anything happened our headquarters people gave us warning that something very special was in the air.

The morning was dull; quite early heavy banks of cloud came rolling up; before noon rain was falling smartly. We had had a spell of drought—that part of the country runs soon to dust—so that ordinarily rain would have been welcome; but as it happened, that was just an occasion on which it suited them and not us. Captain Baring gave us a tip about what had come over the 'phone—he was one of those level-headed chaps who take it for granted that Tommy Atkins would do better if he had some idea of what he was up against.

"We're in for some fun," he said. "So far as I can make out, all Germany is on the war-path. They mean to out us before the sun goes down—or, from the look of things, before it even gets up. I don't know what they're up to, but according to the messages which have been sent it is something very special indeed."

We did not find out directly—indeed, it was not for some time that we really got on to their devilry; but hardly had the captain stopped talking when we got a hint. The guns whose business it was to pay us special

attention had been taking a rest. Suddenly they began again; shells came showering down all round us. They did not quite get our range, but they were sufficiently close to drive us to cover.

A chap named Clark happened to be standing next to me. He had not been with us long—it seemed as if every week or so a whole lot of us were wiped out; it was a wonder how I hung on, without a scratch. Clark was an undersized chap like me, as keen as a razor—there I hope he was also like me. After firing had recommenced a few seconds a sort of general sniffing began. Clark turned towards me.

"Something seems to be smelling very queer, Sergeant; what's happened?"

That was our first introduction to the new German way of making war—by poisoned gas. One of the shells which had fallen and exploded somewhere near us was filling the air, not with the ordinary contents of a shell, but with an atmosphere which no man could breathe. How many had been destined for us we had no means of knowing, but so far we were conscious of only one having reached its destination. Presently, when another followed, we had to get as far as we could under ground, so as to enable the fumes to escape by ways of their own.

So far as we were concerned, the first German experiment was not an entire success, though the conditions could scarcely have been more in their favour. Rain was just what they wanted; the horrible poison might be counted on to do its worst in wet weather—but their marksmanship must have been bad. So far as we could judge, only three or four of their little pots of perfume burst within smelling distance; and, as luck would have it, one of them came just as they were making a frontal attack. We were as much surprised as they were. Before we had the slightest warning of what was about to happen we saw their uniforms glancing among the foliage of a copse upon our left. A consultation was taking place as to whether information had not better be invited from headquarters on what might be the cause of the extraordinary smell which filled the air when the first glimpse of the attack which was coming was seen.

That first attack of theirs was an entire failure. My impression is that they took it for granted that their precious poison would have put in some of its deadly work. They quite possibly had expected to find us stretched out gasping for life—it was they who had to do the gasping. There was some misunderstanding somewhere. No doubt arrangements had been made that firing should cease when it didn't. We had, of course, no actual proof, but judging from appearances a shell must have reached the copse about the same time as they did, exploding much closer to them than the other two had done to us. They had no underground gallery. We saw them suddenly begin to reel before our eyes. While they were staggering about Captain Baring gave us the word to let them have it—and we did!

It was rather a long shot, and the copse gave them some excellent cover, but still we managed to do more mischief with our lead than they had done with their poison. All the same, as I always found was the case where the German soldier was concerned, they were equal to the occasion. Though plainly struggling with difficulty, and looking for a moment as if they would collapse before our eyes, with an effort which was obvious even to us they pulled themselves together, retiring in something like order until, vanishing among the brushwood, they presently reappeared upon our right, to favour us with the contents of their rifles. If, however, their intention was of serious assault, the result was an ignominious failure. Not a man among us was damaged. Plainly their own infernal atmosphere was more than they could stand. What conclusion they arrived at we could not say, but without even attempting a second shot they vanished out of sight.

Not only so; they continued out of sight. Had they put their heads together and arranged the best way of giving us the most discomfort possible they could hardly have succeeded better. All day long we waited in a state of continual fidget for their immediate return. All day it rained; all day the firing continued, without any injury worth speaking of to us. The autumn evening approached without there having been any perceptible interval between the falling shells. Had their bad marksmanship been intentional they could hardly have succeeded in hurting us less. But if we had counted on finishing the day as well off as we were when we began it we reckoned without the methods of our German friends. For the first time the rain was showing signs of stopping; the shadows were deepening. We did not know what the time was, but I do know we had to keep our eyes very wide open to make reasonably sure that there was nothing amid the surrounding trees. The hail of shells had lessened; we were beginning to wonder if they had ceased

for the night, when without an instant's warning our nostrils were saluted by the fumes with which we were already unpleasantly acquainted. Just as we were hoping that we were safe from them, another poison bomb had fallen in our immediate neighbourhood. It was impossible to tell where the visitor alighted ; it was only possible for us to know that it must be uncomfortably close at hand. It is not easy to describe the effect produced by those emissaries of the devil. I can only say that all at once it began to grow increasingly unpleasant to breathe. Some penetrating powder might have been thrown into the air. One's eyes began to irritate, one's head to reel. Breathing was difficult ; when you did succeed in getting a long breath the result was painful.

We cowered as low down in our trench as we could, but without avail. That time the diabolical missile had burst too near for us to escape. Captain Baring gave an order which it was not easy to follow—speaking had become increasingly difficult.

" You chaps had better get out of this while it is possible, and make for the ' Sergeant.' "

The " Sergeant " was a trench which, in a laughing moment, they had nicknamed after me, I, as luck would have it, having been the first to discover its existence. The trench we were in at the moment was one of the newest type, with all the latest improvements. The " Sergeant " was simply a cutting in the ground rather over five feet deep, in which one could find partial shelter from unwelcome fire. It was away from the trees, practically out in the open, probably half a mile from where we were. On more than one occasion, for various reasons, we had left our present address to try the hospitality of the " Sergeant." As Captain Baring put it, we should have to be quick if we wished to try it again ; it was becoming momentarily less and less possible to move or breathe.

I fancy I was in a position in which I was more accessible to the fumes which were poisoning the air ; or perhaps I was more easily affected by those which reached me. I was conscious of bringing up the tail of a lot of men who reeled out of the trench in what seemed to be the last stage of drunkenness. When I got on to the solid ground without things grew worse instead of better—I was totally unable to stand. Something was pressing on my chest with a force which made me feel as if my whole body was about to burst. I was vaguely conscious that my companions had gone staggering off into the gathering shadows, swaying from side to side, hardly conscious of where they were going, unaware that at least one of their number had been left behind.

Striving with all my might to remain upright, my feet had taken me, willy-nilly, off the beaten path, luck only knew where, and then had deposited me in a little clump of brushwood which had served as a trap for my erring steps. How long I lay there I cannot say ; possibly the mischance had been my salvation. A breeze had sprung up which bore the fumes away from me. I must have remained unnoticed for hours. The next thing which struck me was the toe of somebody's boot, which came into such violent contact with my frame that it recalled me to sudden consciousness. The sound of an unknown tongue greeted my ears ; an unwelcome something assailed my ribs ; the point of a bayonet was pushed against my body ; strange words and phrases addressed me again. Then a rough, unfriendly, foreign voice spoke to me in English, in tones which could hardly have suggested more unpleasant intentions.

" You are a prisoner ! Get up, before I stick my bayonet right through you."

It was easy to bid me get up, and to cap his injunction with a threat, but the thing was not so easy to do. I made three or four efforts to obey before, with the aid of a huge, rough, helping hand, I was able to get on to my own feet. Then, so soon as the hand began to be withdrawn, I showed such signs of being unable to stand that the stranger's grip tightened so suddenly that it cut into the muscles of my arm. I had to bite my lips to keep from audible exclamation.

" Gently ! " I substituted for the stronger language which had been trembling on my lips. " You will break my arm if you are not careful. What is it you want to do with me ? "

" You little English worm, what is the matter with you ? Why do you not hold yourself up ? "

" That is more than I can tell you ; something seems to have happened to my ankle, though I can't say what. Who are you ? "

" Who I am does not matter. What does matter is who you are. Where are your associates ? "

This was a gentleman who could speak English almost as fluently as if it were his own tongue. His accent might not be particularly good, but there was no misunderstanding what he said. I wished I had spoken German only a tenth part as well. I was in the hands of the Philistines. Disaster, which I congratulated myself upon having

escaped so long, had me by the throat at last.

What had happened since I had last been conscious I could not tell. The growing morning light was just beginning to brighten the world. I was one among many, an object of interest to a number of gallant soldiers. An officer came towards me, one of those tall, smart, well-uniformed young gentlemen which the German army seems to turn out in endless numbers. His English was even better than his subordinate's. Had I been a reptile beneath his feet his manner could hardly have been more contemptuous.

"What do you want here? Are you a deserter?"

The suggestion stung me, half stupid though I still was.

"I WAS CONSCIOUS OF BRINGING UP THE TAIL OF A LOT OF MEN WHO REELED OUT OF THE

TRENCH IN WHAT SEEMED TO BE THE LAST STAGE OF DRUNKENNESS."

"It is because of your way of making war if I am! The poison which you send at us through the air has robbed me of my senses. No German would have got the better of me by fighting fair, but when it comes to poison it seems that I am beaten."

I am sure that that in effect was what I said to the gentleman; which shows that I must have been still wool-gathering. He looked at me, then he struck me across the face with something which he carried in his hand. I was so little master of myself that I would have struck him back again had it not been for the man who still held me by the arm. He gave my elbow a twist which seemed almost to tear the limb from its socket. While I did my best to hide all signs of the pain which the fellow caused me, the officer seemed to be taking my measure.

"I have a

mind to shoot you, and so finish; you are one of those little English pigs who take advantage of their smallness to be insolent." He addressed the soldier by a name which I did not catch. "Take him down below. Shoot him if he gives you the slightest trouble."

He added something in German which was beyond me altogether. Two men closed up to the first. The officer issued an order. The main body swung off to the right towards what I judged to be the trench which we had vacated overnight. Each of the two newcomers took me by an arm, half dragging, half carrying me away to the copse down the hill upon the left.

I had escaped many mischances, only to find, after all, that the worst thing had happened to me which could have done—I was a prisoner in the hands of the Germans.

My share of the journey down the hill was not pleasant. What had happened to my ankles I did not know; both were useless for purposes of support. My right foot I could not put to the ground without longing to yell. You would have thought that the hardest-hearted captor would have shown some realization of how matters stood. Not so mine. They bumped and swung me along as if my unmistakable agony was most amusing. I was small; they were big; they could hardly have found it very difficult to get me along. At length, more merciful than usual, they let me fall into a patch of herbage which kept me from coming into actual contact with the painfully hard earth. Where I had fallen I lay; every nerve in my body was screaming with agony. The two plumped down beside me; the third, after a brief conversation, joined his friends; the three of them produced food. What the hour was I had no means of knowing; they were plainly of the opinion that it was breakfast time. In spite of the pain I was enduring, I became suddenly conscious that I was quite ready for something to eat. The idea of such a possibility struck my original captor; he held out a lump of some sort of sausage.

"Are you hungry, English pig?"

His voice and manner did not suggest whole-hearted hospitality. I was wise enough not to answer. He considered my silence as bearing a meaning of its own.

"So, swine, you have the manners of your pigsty! When a gentleman asks you a question, can you not answer? I asked if you are hungry—you say nothing. Good! Perhaps it is your custom not to breakfast. Then you shall have the pleasure of seeing three gentlemen eat theirs."

I certainly had what he called the pleasure of seeing those three generous souls enjoying what, from their point of view, was a fairly good meal. Then tobacco-pouches were produced and three pipes lit up. While they smoked it required no interpreter to make it clear that I was the chief topic of their conversation.

Presently, leaning over where I lay, incapable of movement the ruffian who had first kicked me as I lay in his path and then prodded me with the point of his bayonet, made their attitude towards me more than sufficiently clear. He asked me a question which was sufficiently blunt.

"What will you give us if we do not shoot you?"

The inquiry, coming from such a quarter, was startling. Apparently the gentleman required to be paid not to commit murder. I found it difficult to believe that he could be in earnest—although some very unsatisfactory stories were told about the manner in which Englishmen were treated in exactly such circumstances as mine. The fellow seemed to read what was in my mind.

"You think you have nothing to fear? Blockhead! We will quickly show you—though too late for you to profit by your lesson. Why should we drag you with us like a sack of potatoes, when it is so easy to be rid of you and walk at ease? How do you English treat us Germans? How many reach their prisons alive? As if we did not know! You kill us as if killing Germans did not count. How much will you give us to deliver you into the hands which do not want you? If we were to keep alive all you English whom we take prisoners our prisons would not hold you. A plague would lay all the country waste."

How far the fellow spoke truth, in view of the stories which were heard on every side, it was impossible to say. Soldiers who were capable of carrying on war by means of poison were quite probably prepared for anything. At any rate, there was something very unpleasant about the words he used and the manner in which they were uttered—and I may add, so far as his companions were concerned, about the looks with which they were heard. As a matter of fact, I had only a few coppers about my person. Had my pockets been full I should have hesitated about handing over what the ruffians might demand, since I was convinced that the sum I paid would make no difference to them. If

they made up their minds to kill me, no amount of blood-money would stay their hands. Explanations would be so easy, a plausible story so readily concocted. Even if it occurred to their C.O. to ask questions, very little would be required to satisfy him as to what had become of me.

We remained a silent four. A horrible something shone from the three pairs of eyes which looked at me. I was painfully aware that in the way all three rifles were held there was the shadow of death for me. Probably they had become so used to killing that one life more or less counted as nothing.

"Well"—the fellow's bayonet was advanced a foot nearer me—"is that all the answer you have to give? Make no mistake and try to play the fool. Everyone will be content enough to have you out of the way. How much will you give us to spare your life? Quick—out with it! How much money have you in your pocket?"

I considered for some seconds. Had I any sort of weapon about me I should have made an effort to get even with at any rate one of them. But as luck would have it I was without even so much as a penknife—and I could see the fellow knew it. He announced the fact with a chuckle which made me see red.

"So—it is like that! You would shoot us first? But you cannot, you have nothing with which to shoot, not even a popgun. And that is your answer to my question? I ask you again—how much money have you in your pocket? It is the same whether you tell me or not; we can always find out afterwards."

At any rate, I would not give him the satisfaction of a reply. The trio looked at each other—again they looked at me. One of the German-speaking pair said something to which his colleague responded. It perhaps had all the worse sound because it was spoken in a tongue I did not understand. I did not need to have it turned into English to realize that my life was hanging in the balance. There was a momentary silence.

"Once more," said the gentleman of the threats, "how much will you give for your dirty life?"

I do not know what possessed me. Something in the fellow's manner stung me beyond bearing. On a sudden the feeling flamed up in me that the three of them were such dirty cowards—I was so helpless, the odds were so completely on their side. The big, hulking ruffian seemed so keen to sting as well as to kill—and afterwards to rob. A great clod of earth was lying loose—I caught it up with my right hand and flung it in his face. I had luck; the shot told. The lump of dirt, hitting him full on the nose, broke into pieces, covering him with dust and filling his eyes.

That that was the end of the world for me I took for granted. Not only did the dust get into his own eyes and all over him, but it did not add to the comfort of his friends. Exclamations burst from all three; one in particular seemed momentarily to have lost the capacity to see. He clapped his hand up to his eye, an action which, considering how filthy his hand looked, could not have improved the clearness of his vision. The big man raised his rifle.

"For that," he exclaimed, "you die! You play the fool for the last time!"

In that he was mistaken. I have played the fool a great many times since; if fortune continues kind, I hope to do so a few times more. But at the moment I certainly thought he was telling the truth, and that in a few seconds he would have had me spitted. But it is the unexpected which happens. I fancy that just for a second he hesitated whether to shoot or thrust—and that hesitation was his undoing. As it happened, before he could do either, as his weapon was still raised, there was a report. His rifle fell from his hold, his body seemed to collapse—he was dead. So close was he to me that his blood spurted on to my tunic.

The thing was so unexpected, so amazing, that, not understanding how it could otherwise have happened, I was not sure that it had not been caused by his own or his comrades' weapons. The same thought occurred to the others, who stooped forward as if to make sure that they were not the victims of a delusion. For a second time a shot was fired—with the result as before. This time the victim, in falling, came into contact with his friend, who thrust him from him on to the ground and, rising to his feet with surprising agility, took to his heels with a rapidity which showed that, at any rate, he had not lost his presence of mind. So quickly did he move that I did not doubt he would get clean away. But the gun was quicker than the man. He was dashing across a little strip of open ground, another step or two would have taken him into cover—he might at least have gained temporary shelter—when, crack! there was the sharp whiz made by a military rifle when fired at close quarters. As if struck by lightning, without making a sound, the fellow threw out his arms and fell forward on to his face, never to move again. It was, to speak

"THE LUMP OF DIRT, HITTING HIM FULL ON THE NOSE, BROKE INTO PIECES, COVERING HIM WITH DUST AND FILLING HIS EYES."

gently, a curious situation for me to find myself in. Without warning, the position had changed so completely that it was not strange that the only one of my senses left was the sense of wonder. A few seconds before it was as if I had already felt that for me life was over; it was almost as if I had actually tasted the bitterness of death. It is a fact that I was already wondering what explanation the trio would give of what had become of me; instead of which the explanation would have to come from me.

What had happened I yet did not understand. Three fatal shots had been fired,

presumably by an English rifle ; whether by more than one was a question. So soon as I had realized that much I looked for something to occur which would make matters a little clearer. Nothing happened ; not a sound was audible. I was disposed to swear that those three shots had been fired from less than a distance of a hundred yards. You soon get the knack of judging distances from which shots have been discharged when you get into the habit of listening to rifles being fired almost continuously for hours, and even days, together.

As it happens, I have a curiously quick ear in judging of the distance from which a gun has been fired. You see so little of the person behind the gun that sometimes it is a knack which it is extremely useful to have. I mentally decided that those three shots had been discharged from a distance of probably between sixty and seventy yards. I glanced round ; on all sides you could see as far as that. It was long since broad daylight ; the sun was shining brightly. What reason had my saviour to conceal his identity ? I could imagine none.

I tried to struggle to my feet that I might have a better view of my surroundings—it was beyond my power. So callously had my captors handled me in the downward descent that the slightest movement on my part was agony. I did my best to gain a footing, but the thing was beyond my power. My feet, ankles, and legs refused to hold me up. With what I have no doubt was an audible groan, I had to sink back into a struggling heap ; and as I struggled a voice—a feminine voice—exclaimed :—

" Do not struggle. I come ! Do not hurt yourself by trying to do what you cannot."

The voice came from immediately in front of where I sprawled upon the earth. Looking to learn who the speaker was, I perceived it was a woman, who had obviously but that moment emerged from a little copse which limited my range of vision immediately in front. She was at a distance, perhaps, of seventy or eighty yards. As she spoke she moved a little forward, standing very straight with her arms behind her, wearing nothing on her head, as if she had just stepped out of her house.

I should set her down as somewhere in the early twenties—what we soldiers had learned to call a Fleming, of powerful build ; not so much tall, though well up to a woman's average height, but broad and strong. One had no doubt that as regards mere muscular strength she was equal to the average strong man. I did not, for instance, require a second glance to tell me that in her hands I should be a baby. She wore a dark blue short serge skirt, nearly half-way up to her knees, showing a pair of sturdy legs which you felt were very much in keeping with her form. The turned-up sleeves of her blouse, which was a little open at the neck, disclosed a pair of arms which more than matched the rest of her. As, in speechless amazement, I was wondering who she was, whence she came, what she was doing there, moving a few steps forward, taking her arms from behind her back, she revealed the fact that she was holding an Army rifle. Leaning on it with both hands with what was almost an air of ostentatious bravado, she stood and stared at me across the intervening space.

Then she came perhaps half-a-dozen yards nearer, pointing to the bodies of the three Germans. She held her rifle well up in the air, and said, in a tone which affected me more than I should have cared to admit :—

" An eye for an eye ! Why do they stay in my country ? Why do they not go back to their own ? The blood of all I loved is on their hands. I will have some of theirs in exchange. So long as a German remains on Belgian soil it is the duty of a Belgian woman to carry a gun—and to use it when she can."

As I listened, something very curious was happening to me ; I was becoming conscious that this was a woman I had encountered before. The garb was strange, but not only was the voice, with its excellent English—so far as I could judge about it there was not a trace of a foreign accent—familiar, with a familiarity which was bewildering, but the manner, the bearing, was one to which use had made me accustomed.

I stared at her with startled wonder. Was I the victim of some trick of memory ? Was I not mistaking her for someone whom she probably only slightly recalled ? It was incredible that I really should have met such a creature before. At the moment of my telling myself that it was incredible it all came back. The explanation was perfectly simple. It was not strange that about her voice, her bearing, her manner, there was something to which I had grown accustomed in what seemed to be an unusual fashion. The stalwart female who had destroyed the three Germans with such unerring aim—I believe that each of them had been shot straight to the heart—was a woman whom I had known as a waitress in a London tea-shop, who was known to regular customers as " The Belgian," or " Netta "—which, I

"PICKING ME UP FROM THE GROUND, THEY MADE AS LITTLE OF BEARING ME OVER IT AS IF I WAS NOTHING AT ALL."

learnt one day, was short for Antoinette. The discovery so startled me that the name by which we knew her best broke from my lips before I knew it was coming.

"Netta!"

She did not jump; I should say she was physically incapable of doing that, but she did what was probably with her the same

thing—she made a startled movement forward, and, bending towards me, stared with all her might. Recognition came to her.

" Mr. Briggs ! Think of you becoming a soldier ! You fight for my native land ? What has happened which causes you to be here ? "

" What would have happened if it had not been for you ? I was supposed to be a prisoner ; in another second those Germans would have made me a dead one."

" Do you think I did not hear ? They did not speak too softly—it is not a German custom. I heard you coming down the hill ; I saw them enjoying their breakfast—and then I ran for my gun. By good fortune I got it in time—but only just. What is the matter with you ? Can you not walk ? "

" It seems not. I do not quite know what is the matter, but it appears that it will be some time before I can even stand. They have hauled me as if I were a log of wood from the top of the hill."

" You were in the fighting yesterday ? "

" I was in the fighting not only yesterday, but for many days before."

She stood as if considering, then announced the conclusion at which she had arrived.

" It is certain you cannot stay here. Quite close is all that is left of my home, of the house in which my father and grandfather were born and lived, and in which my father was killed because he dared to be found on his own property in his native land. My mother lives there still. She is old, but she is still strong. When I tell her of you, and of who you are, nothing will give her greater pride or pleasure than to give you the shelter of her roof till your feet are well enough to carry you again. There is nothing she loves better than an English soldier. I will fetch her ; in half a minute she will be here."

She turned to go ; I stayed her.

" I doubt if I shall be much better off if she comes. I am afraid I shall be unable to walk, even with assistance."

She smiled in a fashion which used to annoy me in the days gone by.

" I beg your pardon, Mr. Briggs, but you did not use to be so very big and heavy. My mother is still as strong as I am ; she and I will make nothing of carrying you between us."

Before I could think of any appropriate remark to make she had swung round into the copse, and, carrying her gun as one to whom its presence was familiar, vanished among the trees.

In less than ten minutes she was back again, accompanied by a woman whose relationship to herself was obvious. Like herself, she had every appearance of having just left the house. Although her hair was iron grey, she certainly did not look old, and carried herself almost as straight as her daughter, who made short work of the introduction.

" This, Mr. Briggs, is my mother ; she has no English, but she wishes me to tell you how glad she will be to give you the shelter of what is left of her house. She is sorry to hear you cannot walk, but she does not think that, with my help, it will be very difficult to carry you the short distance we have to go."

Those two women, the old and the young one, crossing their hands, gave me what as a child I used to call a " Sedan chair." Picking me up from the ground, they made as little of bearing me over it as if I was nothing at all.

I had always been conscious that I could hardly be called gigantic ; how small I really was I never appreciated until that moment.

When they put me down again it was in the living room in what had once been a comfortable farmhouse. When, later, I heard her story told by the younger woman, I began to understand the way she looked at things. Fate could hardly treat her worse than it had done already. Nearly everyone she held near and dear had been killed before her eyes by the ruthless invaders for no reason whatever, so far as one could judge, except the lust for blood. The happy, thriving home had been turned into a ruin from which even hope was banished. Neither age nor sex had been spared. Brutal, senseless cruelty had usurped the place of law and justice. Anything more dreadful than the tale she told I never heard. By the time she had finished I did not wonder that it was always of the rifle she was dreaming ; that one was never far from her hand ; that, considering what the sight of a German soldier had come to mean to her, the opportunity of using one was never lost. In her unhappy country " German " and " devil " have come to mean the same thing. Wherever a German foot has trod will be found the stain of innocent blood.

On the other hand, she regarded an English soldier almost as if he were something sacred. With all my heart I trusted that her good opinion of him was no higher than he deserved.

One fact was sure—no sacrifice could be too great which would keep an unfriendly German foot from being set upon English ground.

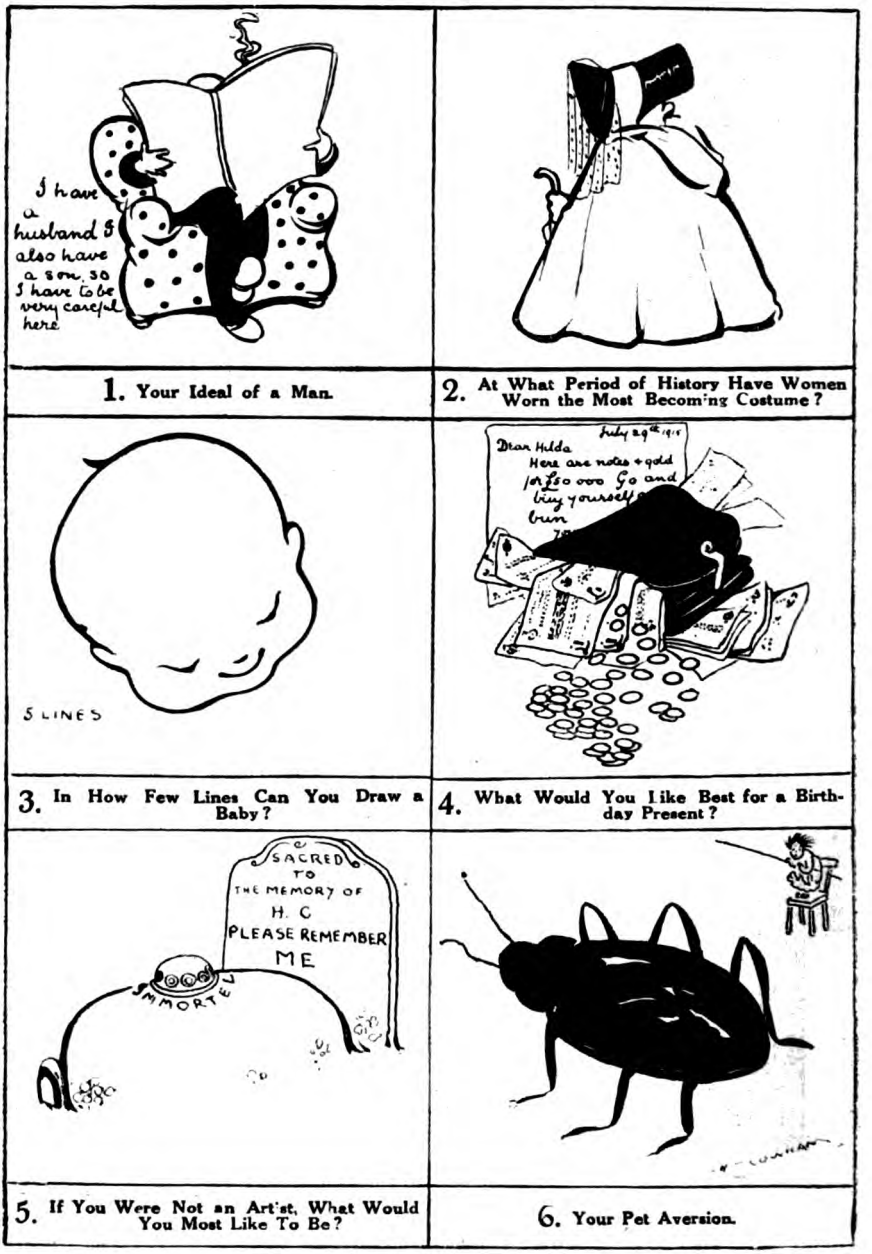
[*The thrilling experiences of Sam Briggs will be continued next month.*]

A Confession-Book for Artists.

Here is a continuation of the novel adaptation of the old idea of Confession-Books, the questions being answered by lady artists, not in writing but by pictures. Other adaptations of the Confession-Book will appear in due course.

Our readers are referred to page 209 for an interesting announcement.

MISS HILDA COWHAM.

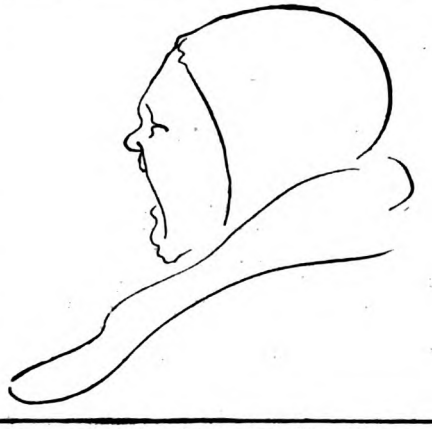


1. Your Ideal of a Man.
2. At What Period of History Have Women Worn the Most Becoming Costume?
3. In How Few Lines Can You Draw a Baby?
4. What Would You Like Best for a Birthday Present?
5. If You Were Not an Artist, What Would You Most Like To Be?
6. Your Pet Aversion.

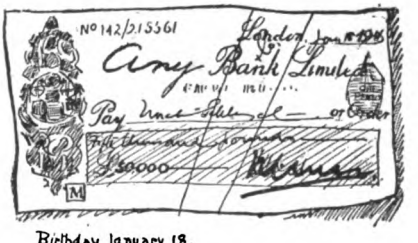
MISS NORA SCHLEGEL.

1. **Your Ideal of a Man.**

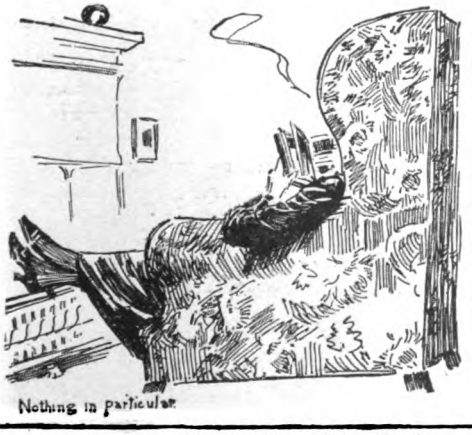
2. **At What Period of History Have Women Worn the Most Becoming Costume?**



3. **In How Few Lines Can You Draw a Baby?**



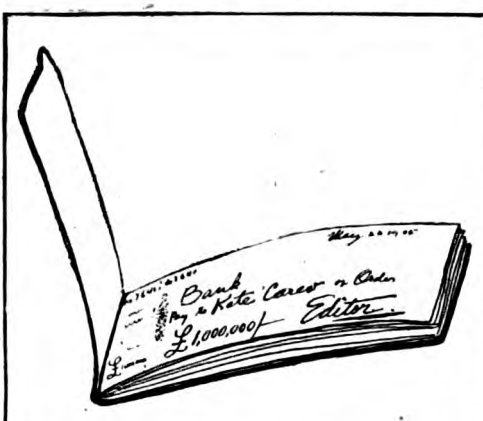
4. **What Would You Like Best for a Birthday Present?**



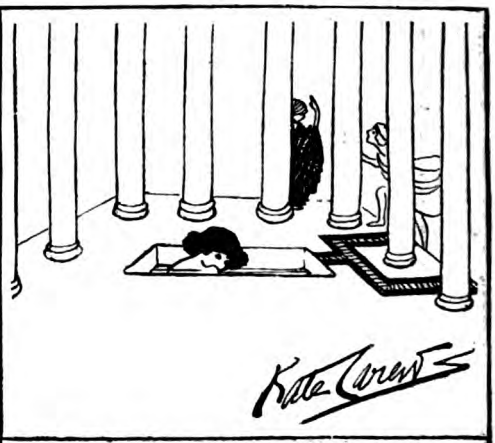
5. **If You Were Not an Artist, What Would You Most Like To Be?**

6. **Your Pet Aversion.**

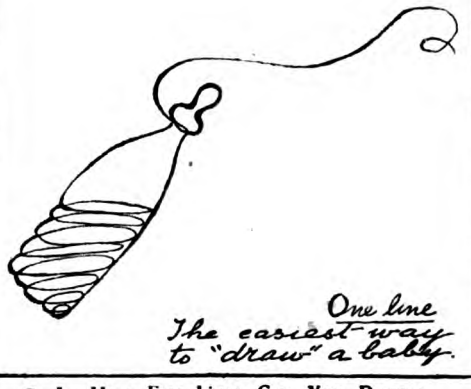
MISS KATE CAREW.



1. Your Ideal of a Man.



2. At What Period of History Have Women Worn the Most Becoming Costume?



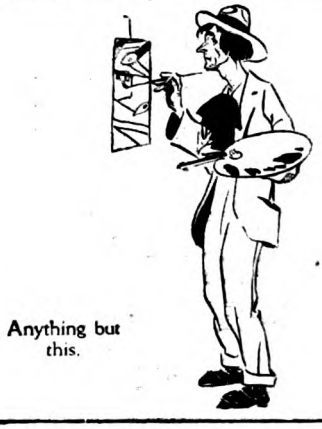
3. In How Few Lines Can You Draw a Baby?

4. What Would You Like Best for a Birthday Present?

5. If You Were Not an Artist, What Would You Most Like To Be?

6. Your Pet Aversion.

MISS HELEN McKIE.



Anything but this.

1. Your Ideal of a Man.

Surely this—so plain and homely

2. At What Period of History Have Women Worn the Most Becoming Costume?

In any case I can't draw a baby.

3. In How Few Lines Can You Draw a Baby?

4. What Would You Like Best for a Birthday Present?

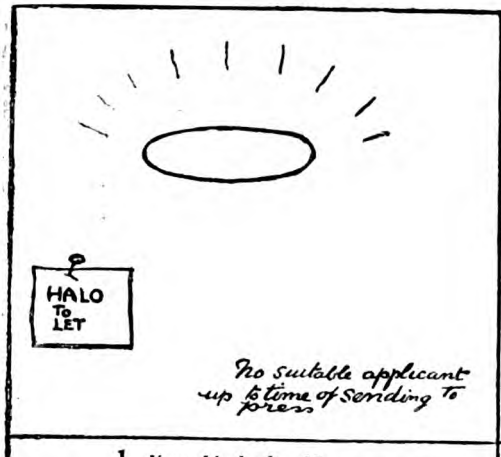
A dicky-bird.

5. If You Were Not an Artist, What Would You Most Like To Be?

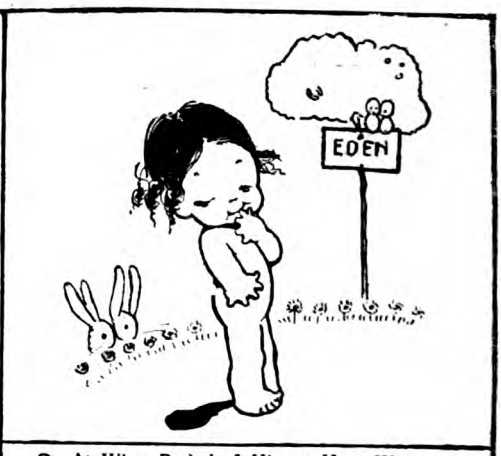
Him, or any of his family.

6. Your Pet Aversion.

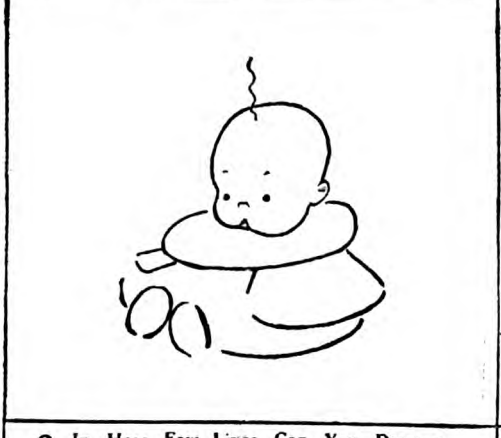
MISS MABEL LUCIE ATTWELL.



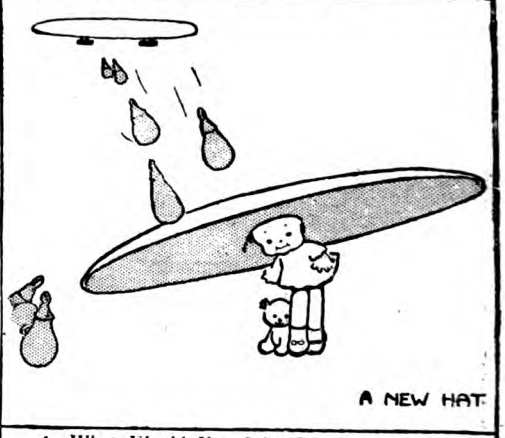
1. Your Ideal of a Man.



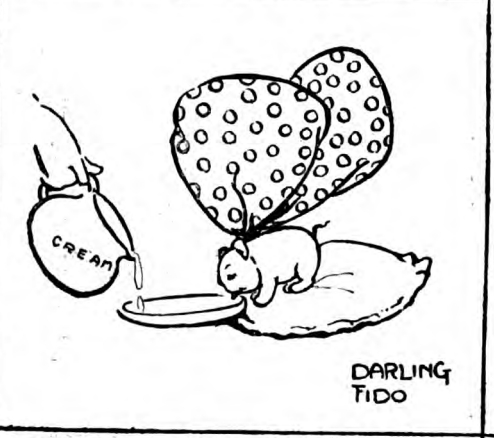
2. At What Period of History Have Women Worn the Most Becoming Costume?



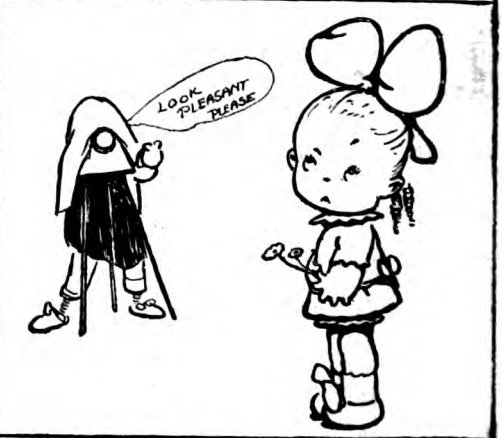
3. In How Few Lines Can You Draw a Baby?



4. What Would You Like Best for a Birthday Present?



5. If You Were Not an Artist, What Would You Most Like To Be?

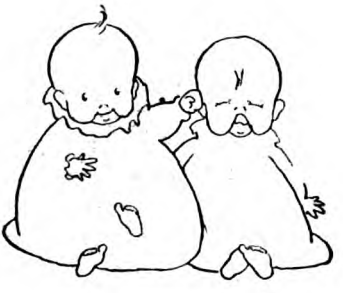


6. Your Pet Aversion.

MISS LOUISE JACOBS.

1. Your Ideal of a Man.

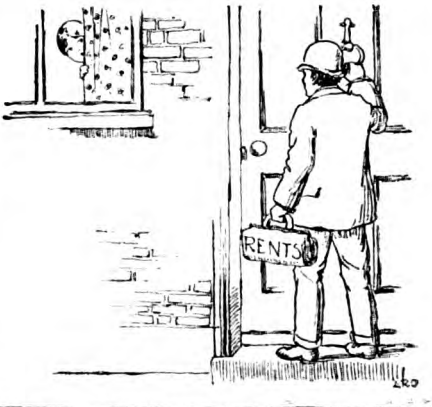
2. At What Period of History Have Women Worn the Most Becoming Costume?



3. In How Few Lines Can You Draw a Baby?

4. What Would You Like Best for a Birthday Present?

5. If You Were Not an Artist, What Would You Most Like To Be?



6. Your Pet Aversion.

JACK OR THE GOLDEN SNUFFBOX

A FAIRY STORY FOR CHILDREN.

Illustrated by W. Heath Robinson.

ALONG time ago, in an age so happy that neither you nor I will ever see its like, there lived an old man and an old woman. They had but one son, who lived with them in the heart of a great forest. The boy had never seen anyone except his father and mother, but he read a great deal, and thus learnt that other folk existed. In his books he found so many references to wonderful princesses that at last he conceived a most violent desire to see one.

One day, when his father had gone into the forest, the young man told his mother that he wished to leave her.

"I see nothing here," he said, "but great trees all round me, and if I stay here I shall never learn anything."

The young man left his mother in tears, and presently met his father. The latter asked whither he was going, and he repeated what he had already said to his mother.

"Very good, my son," said the old man, embracing him. "I am sorry to see you leave us, but since it is your own idea, it is best that you should go."

A moment later, as Jack was pursuing his way, his father called him back, and drew a golden snuffbox from his pocket.

"OUT OF THE SNUFFBOX SPRANG THREE LITTLE RED DWARFS, WHO EXCLAIMED, 'WHAT DO YOU DESIRE OF US?'"

"Take this little snuffbox," he said; "hide it in your pocket, and open it only when you are in danger of death."

The young man journeyed on for a long time, stopping only when compelled by fatigue. Night fell at length, and he could hardly see the road in front of him. In the distance a tiny light glimmered, and, directing his steps towards it, he presently reached a door, upon which he knocked. A servant came to open it, and asked him what he wanted. Jack replied that he was looking for a night's lodging and supper. The servant gave him a meal, and while he was eating the young daughter of the house had the curiosity to come and look at the stranger. His appearance must have pleased her greatly, for she went to her father and told him there was a charming young man in the kitchen.

Her father, in turn, was curious to make the latter's acquaintance. He questioned Jack as to what he was able to do, and the boy replied that he knew how to do everything.

"In that case," said his host, "I bid you contrive that at eight o'clock to-morrow morning there shall be an ocean in front of my house, and on the ocean some great vessels. The biggest of the ships shall fire a gun in the king's honour, and the last bullet shall split in two the foot of the bed in which my daughter sleeps. If you do not carry out the whole of this task, you are a dead man!"

"Very good," said Jack; "there will be no difficulty about that." And, with these words, he went upstairs to his chamber, said his prayers, and fell asleep.

He woke a little before eight o'clock, with barely time to remember his host's commands. Recollection came to him of the snuffbox which his father had given to him.

"Never," he remarked to himself, "have I been so near death as at this moment!"

He felt in his pockets, drew forth the golden snuffbox, and opened it. Out of it sprang three little red dwarfs, who exclaimed, "What do you desire of us?"

"I desire," said Jack, "that there should be at this very moment before this house an ocean, and on this ocean some great vessels, of which one shall fire a gun in honour of the king, and the last bullet must split in two the foot of the bed on which my host's daughter is sleeping."

"It will be done," said the dwarfs; "sleep again."

Before Jack could say another word, eight o'clock struck, and the report of a gun resounded through the air. He leaped out of bed, and I can assure you that no one was more astonished than he to find himself so well obeyed. He donned his clothes, went downstairs, and met the master of the house.

"That was not at all badly done, young fellow," said the latter, as he came up; "you are certainly clever. Two more tasks, and I give you my daughter. But, first of all, to breakfast."

Jack ate with an excellent appetite, and exchanged tender glances with the young girl.

The second task consisted of transporting all the trees in the garden a league away before the following morning, and, not to make our story too long, it will be enough to say that Jack succeeded, and his host was very pleased.

"There now remains," said the latter, "only the third task. You must build me a great castle resting on twelve golden pillars. In front of this castle I wish to see a regiment at drill, and, at the moment when eight o'clock is striking, the colonel must cry, 'Shoulder arms!'"

"I quite understand," said Jack.

On the morrow everything went as it should, and the young man received his host's daughter in marriage.

But Jack, alas, was not at the end of his troubles. There came a day when his father-in-law, who was a wealthy nobleman, arranged a great hunting party, to which he invited all his friends and neighbours, with the object of showing them the new mansion which Jack had built. Jack himself was bidden to assemble the guests in the hunting-field and bring them all back to the castle, and his father-in-law presented him with a fine horse and a purple jacket. He put the latter on and went off.

But during Jack's absence a servant felt in the pockets of his old coat and pulled out the golden snuffbox which had been left behind. He opened it, and on the instant three red dwarfs came forth and asked his wishes.

"I desire," said the servant, "that this castle shall be transported far from here to the other side of the ocean."

"Good. Do you wish to be taken with it?"

"Yes."

"Then climb up on the roof."

The servant obeyed, and the castle took flight to the farther side of the ocean.

When the huntsmen returned not a vestige

of castle, not a trace of golden pillars! Everything had vanished, to the great disappointment of the guests.

The blame was laid on Jack, and his father-in-law gave him a year and a day in which to recover the lost castle. If he were not successful when this period of grace was up, his wife was to be taken from him. The poor lad, therefore, set forth, taking with him a good horse and a large sum of money.

He travelled up hill and down dale, through dark forests and over great deserts, and arrived one day at the palace of the King of the Mice. A small mouse was on guard before the door, and cried out: "Halt! Who goes there?"

"I wish to see the king," said the young man.

The Sovereign received him well, and asked him whither he was going. Jack replied that he had lost a great castle, and was obliged to find it and bring it back to his father-in-law within a year and a day.

"We will look for it to-morrow," said the king; "for the moment, to dinner!"

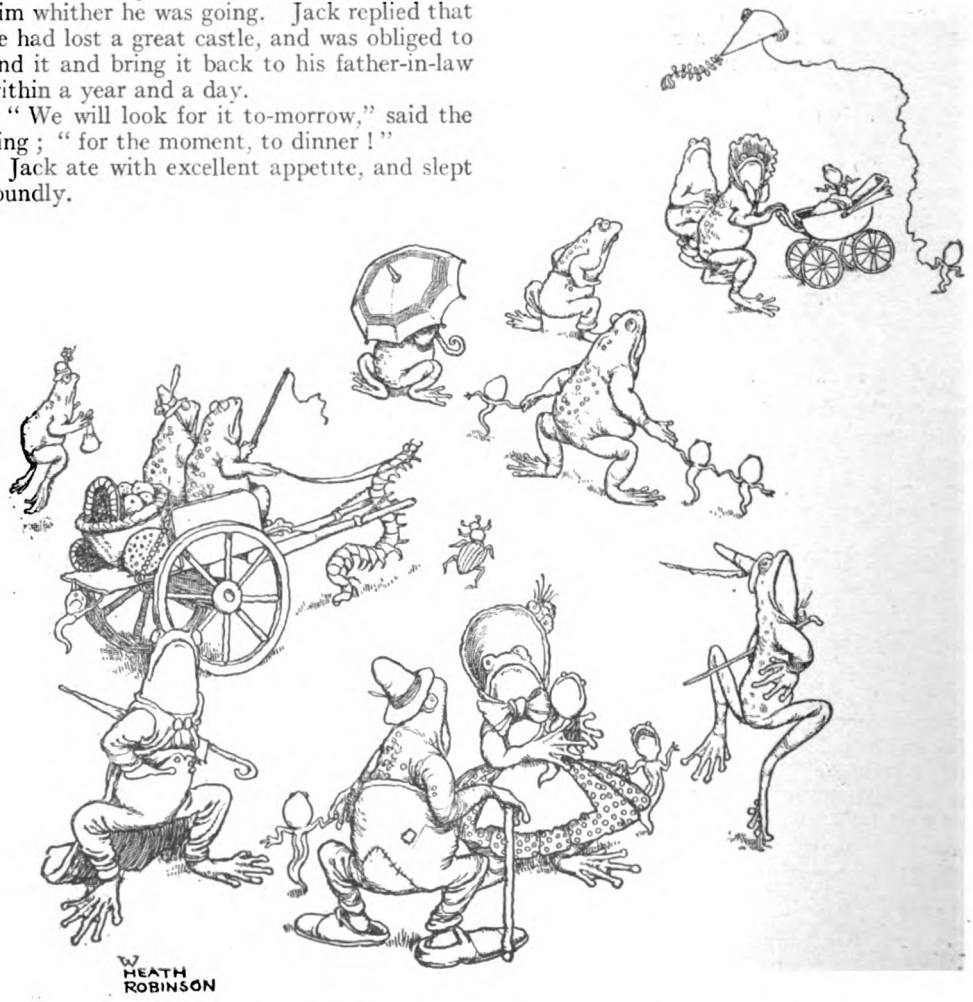
Jack ate with excellent appetite, and slept soundly.

On the morrow he accompanied the king to the parade-ground, where all the mice in the world had been mustered by Royal order. A herald asked them if they knew of a great castle built on twelve pillars of gold.

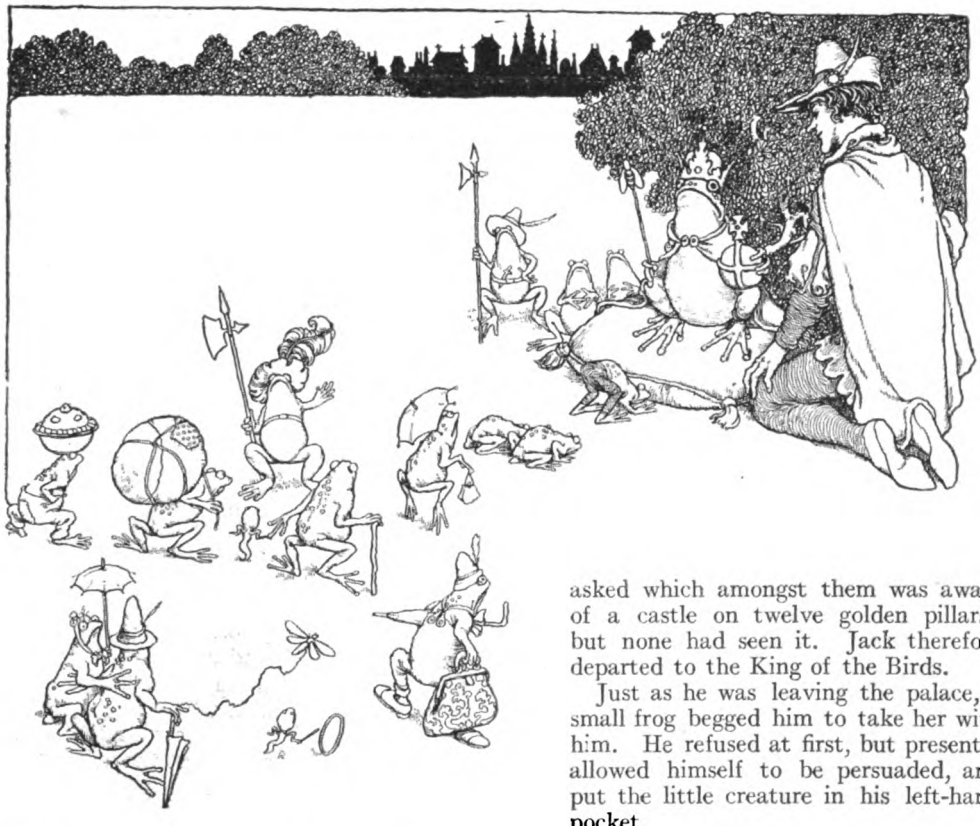
"No!" they replied, with one voice.

The king advised the young man to pay visits to his two elder brothers, the King of the Frogs and the King of the Birds.

"Seek them out," he said; "for possibly they will have heard tell of your palace. Here is a cake which you will deliver to the King of the Frogs, and by this token he will know that you have been sent to him by me. Do not forget to tell him that I am in good health, and that I shall be happy to have news of him."



"FROM ALL SIDES THE FROGS OF ALL THE WORLD WERE SEEN HASTENING UP."



Jack took his leave ; and just as he was crossing the threshold he perceived a little mouse, who begged him to take her with him. Fearing that to do so would displease the king, he refused ; but the mouse insisted.

" Perhaps I shall be able to help you," she said.

" Very well ; up with you."

The mouse climbed all the way up the horse's leg, and so reached the young man's boot. He then picked her up and put her in his right-hand pocket.

After travelling long upon the road, Jack at last reached the kingdom of the frogs. In front of the palace was a frog doing sentry-go, with a little gun upon his shoulder, who cried out : " Halt ! Who goes there ? "

" I wish to see the king," said the young man ; and he was forthwith admitted.

The king came to meet him, and Jack told his story anew, right from the beginning to the end. When it was concluded, they supped and retired to bed.

On the morrow a shrill whistle pierced the air, and from all sides the frogs of all the world were seen hastening up. The king asked which amongst them was aware of a castle on twelve golden pillars ; but none had seen it. Jack therefore departed to the King of the Birds.

Just as he was leaving the palace, a small frog begged him to take her with him. He refused at first, but presently allowed himself to be persuaded, and put the little creature in his left-hand pocket.

He rode three times as far as on his previous journeys, and arrived at length at the palace of the eldest of the three brothers.

A charming little bird was mounting guard, but allowed the traveller to pass freely into the king's presence, where his tale was related once more.

" Very good," said the king ; " to-morrow I will summon my subjects, and they will tell you if they know your castle."

Jack put his horse in the stable, dined, and went to bed.

On the morrow the king took him into the fields and began to whistle. Instantly the birds of all the world flocked round them, but to the question which was put to them they replied that not one of them had seen the castle.

" Wait a moment," said the king ; " I do not see here the greatest of you all."

They waited for a little while, and then two little birds flew forth to seek the laggard.

Presently there appeared an enormous eagle, who seemed quite exhausted. The king asked him if he knew of a castle with twelve golden pillars.

"Yes," said the eagle; "I have just come thence."

"That is good," said the king; "this young man has lost it. You will take him there as soon as you have had some rest and refreshment."

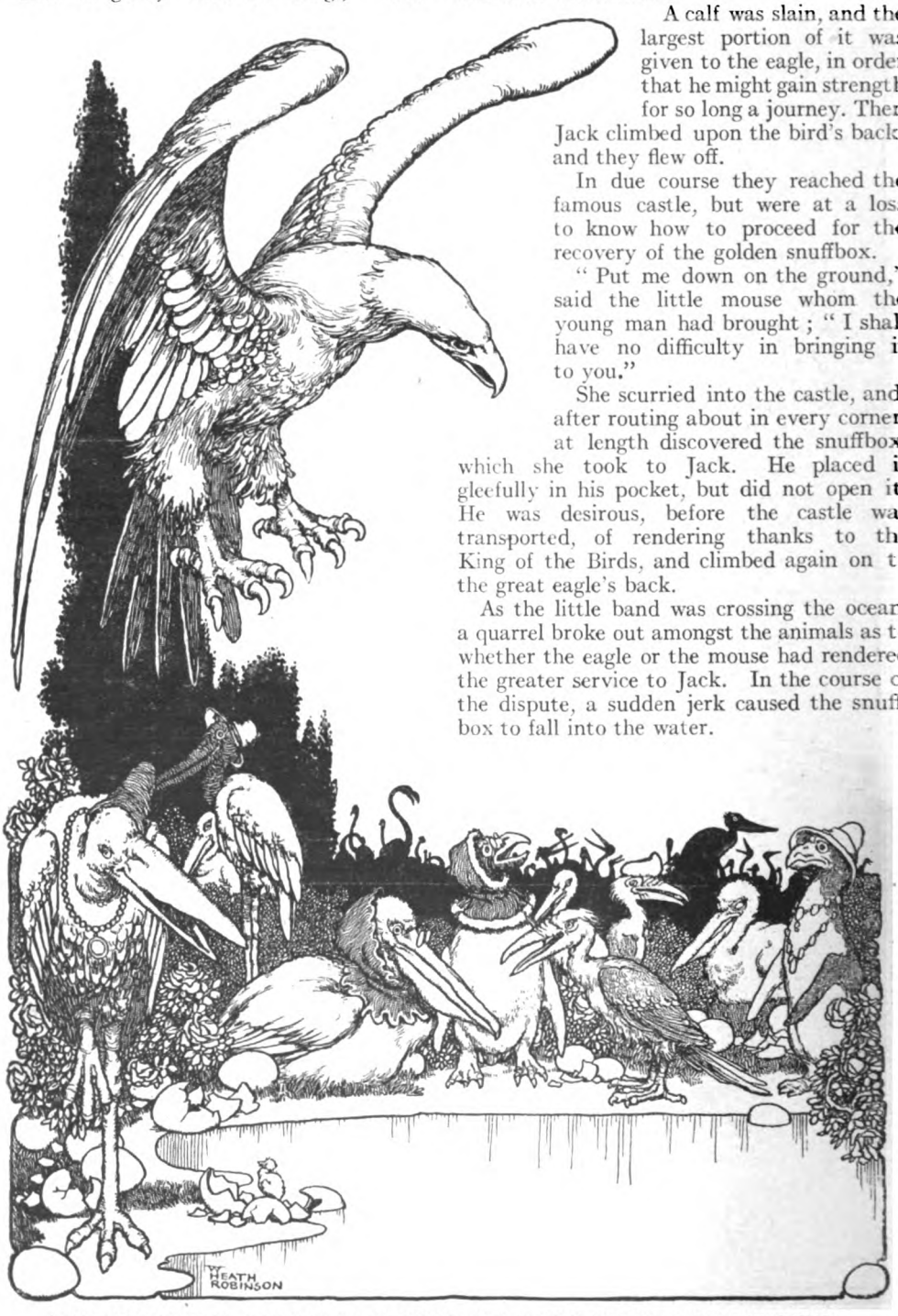
A calf was slain, and the largest portion of it was given to the eagle, in order that he might gain strength for so long a journey. Then Jack climbed upon the bird's back, and they flew off.

In due course they reached the famous castle, but were at a loss to know how to proceed for the recovery of the golden snuffbox.

"Put me down on the ground," said the little mouse whom the young man had brought; "I shall have no difficulty in bringing it to you."

She scurried into the castle, and, after routing about in every corner, at length discovered the snuffbox, which she took to Jack. He placed it gleefully in his pocket, but did not open it. He was desirous, before the castle was transported, of rendering thanks to the King of the Birds, and climbed again on to the great eagle's back.

As the little band was crossing the ocean, a quarrel broke out amongst the animals as to whether the eagle or the mouse had rendered the greater service to Jack. In the course of the dispute, a sudden jerk caused the snuffbox to fall into the water.



"PRESENTLY THERE APPEARED AN ENORMOUS EAGLE, WHO SEEMED QUITE EXHAUSTED.

"There!" said the frog; "I knew quite well that you would have need of me."

She plunged into the depths of the ocean, and was lost to sight for three days and nights. At the end of that time she pushed her nose out of the sea, in order to take breath. The rest flew down towards her, asking if she had found the snuffbox.

"No," she said.

"Then what are you doing on the surface?"

"Nothing at all; but I must take breath."

A moment later she dived again, and after searching for another day and night she at length brought back the precious object.

Continuing their journey, the travellers arrived, some four days later, at the home of the King of the Birds. The latter was rejoiced to see them, received them courteously, and conversed with them for a long time.

Presently Jack opened the snuffbox, and bade the red dwarfs seek out the castle. The dwarfs departed, and, despite their fears that the folks in possession of the mansion might be at home, the latter proved, luckily, to be out. Only a kitchen-maid and a serving-wench were on the premises, and these were made to climb on to the roof.

Hardly had they got there when their masters returned. But the latter were too late—they could only raise their arms to the sky, and despairingly watch their castle flying at full speed through the air.

After a journey of nine days the spot was reached where the king and Jack were in waiting. The king greatly admired the castle, and wished to ascend the golden steps in order to inspect the interior. But the year and a day of grace was nearly at an end, and Jack, being anxious to regain his young wife, bade the dwarfs set him on the way.

When the journey was ended, there was Jack's wife, coming to meet her husband with a chubby and delightful baby-boy in her arms!

The young couple made their home in the castle, and lived there happily for a long time with the mouse and the frog.

THE KING ASKED HIM IF HE KNEW OF A CASTLE WITH TWELVE GOLDEN PILLARS."

MULTUM IN PARVO.

A COMPENDIUM OF SHORT ARTICLES.

A Mascot Mermaid.

BY HERBERT VIVIAN.

MY washerwoman on the Italian Riviera married a well-to-do man, who fell on evil times. His dying father said to him, "I can leave you no money, but I give you something worth much more than money, and I am convinced that some day it will bring fortune to one of our family. It is a mermaid, caught by my father while fishing off the island of Bergeggi. He caught it alive at a spot where you can see the ruins of old Roman rooms at the bottom of the sea in clear weather, and he set great store by it." So far it has not brought any luck to the family, but it certainly has a very strange, uncanny appearance. It has been elaborately mounted, in a very ugly way, with shells and seaweed and bits of coral on a piece of rock, is covered with a glass case, and kept in a padded box. From head to tail it measures about eighteen inches, and is certainly genuine, for there is no trace of seam or join. The human and fish parts of the body are of equal length. The scales are still fresh and glossy and well marked, varying in colour from yellow to deep brown and green. The head and back and arms are black, perhaps with age, and there is no trace of there ever having been any hair. There are furrows on the back of the head, and the ribs are prominently marked; to the touch all is as hard as a statue. The expression of the face is ugly, but not unpleasantly so. Eyes and mouth are unduly large. The two rows of tiny, sharp, fish-like teeth are well preserved. The five fingers on each hand, with little nails, are as distinct as those of any human being; the ears also. The arms are proportionately as long as those of an ape. Perhaps it is a merman or a mer-baby. It certainly does not suggest the charms or overwhelming attractions of the sirens of legend and romance.

IS IT MERMAID, MERMAN, OR MER-BABY?

A Human Telescope.

BY C. L. McCLUER STEVENS.

An article telling how a man, by dint of constant practice, has succeeded in being able to add at will several inches to his stature.

"CAN a man, by taking thought, add a cubit to his stature?"

The quotation, of course, is from the Bible; and one may say at once that it is still impossible, as it was then, for a man—either by taking thought or in any other way—to add a cubit to his stature; for the Hebrew cubit, according to the best authorities, was probably not less than about eighteen inches long. On the other hand, however, there is living at this present moment in London a man who is able to increase his height at will by between seven and eight inches. This is Mr. Arthur Carlton Philps, well known on the music-hall stage these twenty years past as a clever comic conjurer and illusionist under his pseudonym of "Carlton." There is, however, let us hasten to add, no conjuring or illusion about this particular feat. The increase of height is real—that is to say, not apparent only—and is accomplished by stretching the muscles of the knees, hips, chest, throat, and other parts of the body, and maintaining them rigidly in that position by what is more or less an exercise of will-power. In short, "Carlton" grows before one's eyes, adding to his stature inch by inch—a sort of human telescope.

How really marvellous is this extraordinary feat may be gauged if we stop to reflect that tens of thousands of men are debarred from entering the Army, or kept out from the regiments of their choice, because they lack so little as an inch of the minimum stature fixed by the authorities. Yet here is a man who is able at will to add to his height, not one inch only, but two, three, four, and so on, and this without apparent effort.

"Carlton" does not pretend to be the originator of the feat. A man named Willard, an American, did the same thing in the States, and so far as "Carlton" is aware he is the only man, besides himself, who has ever succeeded in accomplishing it. For it must not be imagined that it is an easy thing to do. On the contrary, it is exceedingly difficult. Mr. Willard, for instance, overstrained himself in practising it, and was very ill in consequence, and "Carlton" also found the ill effects so pronounced that he never produced the feat—as was his original intention—in public, and only performs it now very occasionally in private for the benefit of his friends, or, even more rarely, for charity.

"CARLTON" AS HE APPEARS ON THE STAGE.

"How I came first to know about it," said "Carlton" recently, "was this way. Inman, the billiard champion, was visiting my house, and he brought Willard with him. After lunch we strolled out on the lawn, and I suddenly noticed that my American guest had apparently grown taller; as indeed, of course, he had. Naturally, however, I put it down to my fancy. But a minute or so later, on looking up suddenly from an orchid I had been examining, I saw that he was taller than ever, and I suppose I looked the amazement I felt. Anyway, Inman and he burst out laughing, and the former then introduced Willard as 'The Man Who Grows.'

"Afterwards Mr. Willard was good enough to explain his method to me, and that night, after my guests had gone, I started practising on my own account. While I was at it, and still more after I had finished, I felt something of the sensations, I suppose, experienced in the olden days by criminals on the rack. Every bone, muscle, and sinew in my body ached; every nerve seemed on the quiver. But I persevered; and in time I succeeded.

"I found, however, that the difficulty of the feat, and incidentally its attendant pain and discomfort, increased enormously with each additional inch. The first one was not so bad. But putting its difficulties, etc., at, say, ten, then those inseparable

CARLTON WITH HIS SECRETARY —ORDINARY HEIGHT.

AFTER INCREASING HIS HEIGHT FOUR INCHES.

A FULL EIGHT INCHES TALLER THAN IN THE FIRST PHOTOGRAPH.

from the next inch of increase were fully one hundred; the third inch was represented by one thousand, and so on. In short, it resolved itself into a case of what mathematicians call, I believe, geometrical progression.

"For these reasons I should not recommend the ordinary man to attempt the feat. He may easily do himself a serious injury. The strain told hardly on me, as I have already said."

In conclusion it may be mentioned that "Carlton" has succeeded in mystifying a good many people by this growing feat, including at least one famous Scotland Yard detective. "I was playing billiards with him," he says, "and an argument arose as to our relative heights. He was a tall man, measuring six feet in his stockings, which is also my normal height. His impression was that he was taller than I, and to settle the point we adjourned to a police-station and were measured by a machine that they kept there for recording the heights of criminals.

"He, of course, measured his ordinary six feet. I stretched myself ever so slightly, and of course without any apparent effort, and beat him by an inch. 'Well,' he exclaimed, 'I should never have thought it!' 'Oh,' I retorted, 'I believe it's the fault of that old machine of yours. It doesn't record accurately. I'm taller than that.'

"'Oh, that's nonsense!' he replied, hotly. 'Thousands of criminals have been measured by it, some of them several times over and on different occasions, but the measurements never vary by more than the minutest fraction of an inch. I'll bet you anything you like you're wrong.'

"Of course, I wasn't going to bet on a certainty, so I simply said that I thought he was mistaken, and, placing myself on the platform of the machine, I invited him to readjust the measuring arm. This time it stood at six feet two inches.

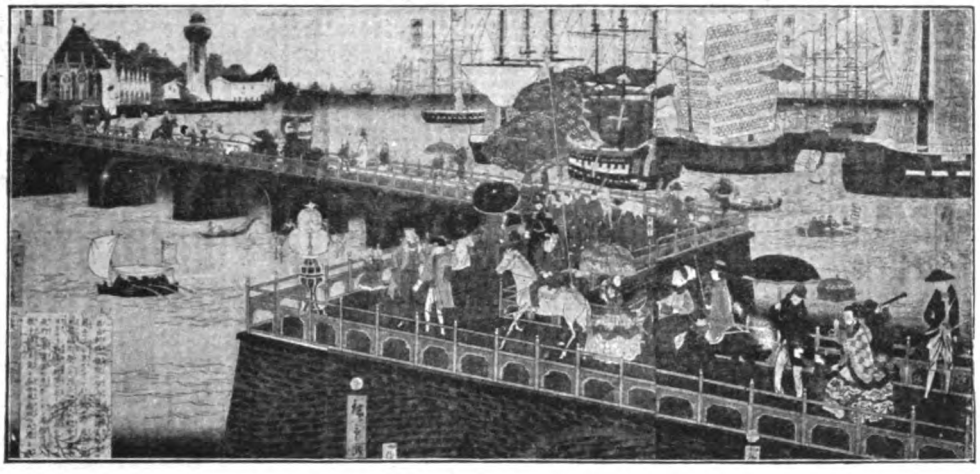
"'Well, I'll be hanged!' he ejaculated, in blank amazement. 'This beats everything. I can't understand it.' 'Nor can I,' I replied, gravely, 'because by rights I should measure six feet four inches. Will you please try again?'

"Too astonished to reply, he proceeded to do as I had asked. The measuring arm registered six feet four and a half inches. 'Half an inch too much,' I said. 'Your machine's no good.'

"By this time my detective friend hardly knew whether he was standing on his head or his heels. He was dumbfounded—flabbergasted. So, taking pity on him, I explained to him how it was done.

"'Well,' he remarked, thoughtfully, after he had recovered somewhat from his astonishment, 'I hope the knowledge of how to accomplish the feat won't spread among the criminal fraternity, for if it does the Anthropometrical Department at Scotland Yard may as well close down.'"

England Through Japanese Eyes.



A JAPANESE ARTIST'S IDEA OF LONDON BRIDGE.

THERE is a quaint perversion in Japanese art which translates all that it sees, although it may have an exact model before it, into terms of Japanese convention.

So it is with the curious hand-printed woodcuts here reproduced, issued on the occasion of the ceremonial opening of Nagasaki and Hakodate ports to European commerce in 1856, after the empire had been closed to foreign intercourse for nearly two and a half centuries.

On this occasion, so important in the history of Japan, were issued many volumes of coloured woodcuts, to introduce to the Orient the wonders of the Occident, and this particular book, by Goutei-Sahide, professes to give views of the chief European cities and of the manners and customs of those Western barbarians who had settled in Dai-Nippon since the forcing of the embargo by Captain Perry in 1854.

In the first view is shown London Bridge, and the artist, to accommodate the great length of the structure, has doubled it on itself, giving it a right-angled turn; the Tower of London in the distance is faintly reminiscent of Westminster Abbey, and the Monument of the Great Fire of London reproduces the Shot Tower at Waterloo Bridge; and although we know a Chinese junk was once on exhibition on Father Thames, a fleet of ships with

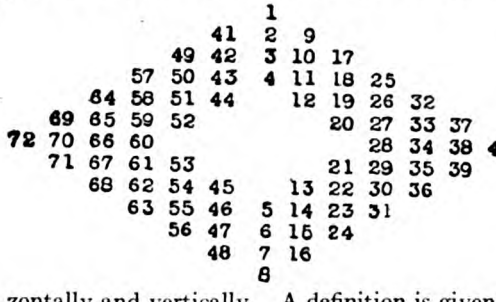
AN ENGLISHMAN'S HOME—A LA JAPANESE.

matting sails is still an unknown quantity there. The costume, too, is decidedly Japanesque, for while the gentleman on the extreme right is in the fashion of 1750, most of the others follow faithfully the modes of 1856. One would think, too, that a Chinese native carriage drawn by two diminutive oxen would be rather a novelty in the Borough, whence it must have come.

The other illustration shows the interior of an Englishman's home, where the family are at breakfast (note the Pre-Raphaelite treatment of the cruet-stand). They are evidently eating to ragtime played by the gentleman with the 'cello. A view of a river, perhaps again the Thames, with shipping and sampans with their distinctive sails, is seen through the open door.

A Diamond Problem.

THE following is a good example of a type of problem that used to be very popular some years ago. In these Diamond Problems each number represents a letter of the alphabet which, when substituted for the figures, forms part of a word. These words run both horizontally and vertically. A definition is given against each group of numbers to assist in the solution of the problem. For instance: The numbers 1 to 4 represent a word of four letters; likewise 41 to 9 a word of three letters, and so on, until thirty-two words of different lengths have been made.



1- 4.	A place of detention.	45-48	A burden.
9-12.	To agitate.	53-56.	A carriage of wood.
17-20.	A period of time.	41- 9.	An aerial fluid.
25-31.	Disturbing the peace.	49-17.	Spoil.
32-36.	An empty railway truck.	57-25.	One who trifles.
37-39.	A small animal.	64-44.	To bind.
21-24.	Importunate creditors.	69-52.	An interjection.
13-16.	A measure.	72-60.	A decree.
5- 8.	Board.	71-53.	A vulgar person.
41-44.	A metal.	68-45.	A unity.
49-52.	An abbreviation of a title.	63-31.	Nursing.
57-63.	To pervert.	56 24.	Articles of interest.
64-68.	An extraordinary man.	48-16.	To fix.
69-71.	A pronoun.	12-32.	A fence.
		20-37.	A loud noise.
		28-40.	A snare.
		21-39.	A foul substance.
		13-36.	Small.

The definitions, although purposely a trifle ambiguous in some instances, in order to make the solution a little less easy, are nevertheless absolutely correct.

The solution will be given next month.

"The Best War Story I Have Heard."

AN INVITATION TO OUR READERS.

Previous invitations to our readers to contribute to our pages have had such happy results that once more we wish to try the experiment. Most readers have heard at first or second hand some story of the war which seems too good to be lost. This is the story we want you to send us. Whether it be serious or humorous is immaterial, so long as it is a good one, and all stories published will be paid for. Mark envelopes "War Stories." We give below a few specimen stories, sent to us by some of our best-known contributors.

By WILL OWEN.

I THINK one of the funniest stories that I have heard in connection with the war is one of two Jews—the one German and the other Russian.

At dead of night they leave their respective trenches—each bearing a banner.

They meet in the no man's land between the trenches, exchange banners, and silently return with their trophies, and are both decorated for their prowess. Business as usual!

By W. PETT RIDGE.

ARISTOCRATIC old French lady to Private Atkins (with enthusiasm): "You English soldiers, you are so wonderful, yes. You are so brave. You are so magnificent. You are so splendid. You are so handsome. You are so——"

Private Atkins (remembering Kitchener's advice): "Hop it!"

By COULSON KERNAHAN.

MY friend, Colonel F. G. Langham, V.D., of the 5th (Cinque Ports) Royal Sussex Regiment—it was not he who told me the story—before taking his command to the Front, where they have achieved glory and,

alas! lost heavily in officers and men—was arranging for an officer to take charge of a certain company which was to remain behind, partly for home defence, partly to supply drafts to replace casualties.

"Mr. So-and-so," he said to one of his subalterns, "I will ask you to carry on here with —— Company, in the absence of its commanding officer at the Front."

The subaltern came to attention and saluted. "I beg your pardon, sir," he said. "I obey your orders, of course, but if it is all the same to you, sir, I have set my heart on going out yonder."

"Oh, you have, have you?" commented the colonel shortly, but not unkindly. He walked to a little group of officers in another part of the drill hall. "Mr. So-and-so" were his words to a second-lieutenant, "I'm arranging to leave you in charge of —— Company while we're away. I know you will keep them up to the work, and that I leave things in good hands."

The young officer's face was a study of disappointment and embarrassment.

"But I had counted on serving under you, sir, out there," he stammered. "I'd lose ten years of my life rather than miss it. For God's sake—I beg your pardon, sir—I was only going to say that I'll take it as a very great favour and honour to be allowed to go out to France."

"Humph!" said the colonel, gruffly. Then he turned to another officer. "You are young in the service, but older than some of the others in years. I'm going to give you the responsibility of carrying on this side with —— Company for the present."

The other flushed up. "I venture, sir," he said, stiffly but very respectfully, "to remind you that my name was down from the very first for war service, and so I hope, sir, that——"

The colonel did not hear him out but walked over to yet another to speak to the same effect, and to receive, in effect, the same reply. Respectfully but very firmly the officer pleaded to be allowed a place at the Front.

Even the women readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE will, I think, forgive it when I say that Colonel Langham swore.

"It seems to me," he said, with seeming anger, "that I'm in command of the most undisciplined, insubordinate set of officers in all the service." With knitted brows, he twisted his moustache for a moment. Then he broke into a laugh, and with just a suspicion of a tremble in his voice he added: "But, damn it, I'm proud of you all!"

And surely every Briton who reads this incident—not a story, but a record of actual facts—will share that pride.

By HAROLD BEGBIE.

THE most heroic story of the war which has come my way is that of some Roman Catholic nuns in Ypres. They were ordered back by the authorities to Poperinghe, about six miles away, because the German bombardment was smashing the city to a dust-heap. They begged to be allowed to stay in the hospital, where they were nursing soldiers. But authority was inexorable. On the worst night of the bombardment, shells falling as fast as hailstones, houses crashing down on every side, and rain pouring from a blackened sky, these French nuns were marched to Poperinghe. But once there, two of them eluded authority, and tramped all the way back through the rain to bombarded Ypres in order to nurse the wounded soldiers in hospital. And those wounded soldiers were Germans!

Of humorous stories I like best that of the old sergeant who said cheerfully to a rather dismal regiment just arrived from England at one of the bases: "Come, my lads, buck up; it's only the first seven years of a war that are really bad."

By ALFRED LESTER.

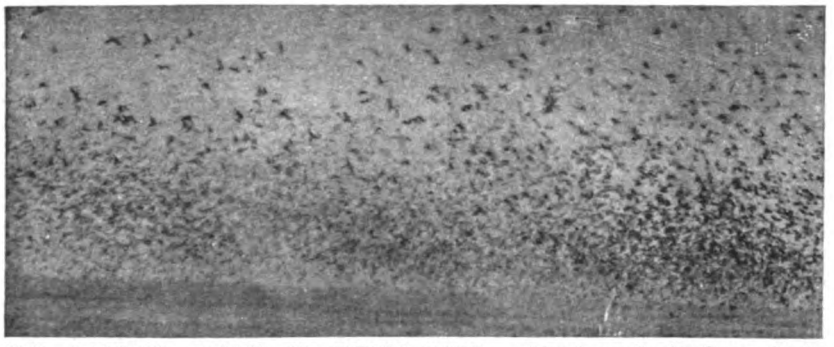
ARMY doctor to officer friend watching recruits march by: "It's strange how one can tell by a little observation what a man's occupation was previously to joining the Colours. For instance, look at Private Jones there—I'll bet he was a clerk, for he is always trying to put his rifle behind his ear!"

By HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL.

THE following story illustrates the Irishman's well-known love of fighting. A wounded Tommy, belonging to the Leinsters, who had been in several bayonet charges, regretted his inability to deal with more than one Hun at a time. This is how he put it: "I was afther wan of 'em, sorr, and, faith, I cud see not a wan but him! I rimimbered afterwards that I'd passed by two others whom I could 'av shtuck wid the greatest aise!"

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]



THE LARGEST FLOCK OF DUCKS EVER PHOTOGRAPHED.

THE ducks shown in this photograph were feeding in the irrigated barley fields of the Imperial Valley, Lower California, Mexico. The water softens the ground, floating up the grains from last year's crop, and the birds resort to these enormous fields from all the Pacific Coast. Their flocks run into the millions. The photograph, made from an untouched negative, was taken with a lens of ordinary angle just as a flock rose, frightened by the appearance of the photographer from behind a mule, which had been ridden up quite close to the birds. They paid little attention to a man when on a mule or a horse, being used to the Mexican ranch-riders, but were very much afraid of a man on foot. The section shown was hardly a sixth of the huge flock, which extended several hundred yards to the right and left of the birds shown in the picture.—Mr. Edward C. Crossman, 3,416, Glen Albyn Drive, Los Angeles, Cal., U.S.A.

SHERLOCK HOLMES DRAWN BY TYPEWRITER.

THIS portrait of Sherlock Holmes was done entirely on a typewriter, the underlining stop being used for the contour, full-stops for the eyes, and brackets for the hair. It is astonishing how long it takes to do even a simple little sketch of this sort. This one took me from two to three hours, and, as may be imagined, the work requires much patience.—Miss Adelaide S. Adcock, 19, Gordon Street, Gordon Square, W.C.

A POSTAL CURIOSITY.

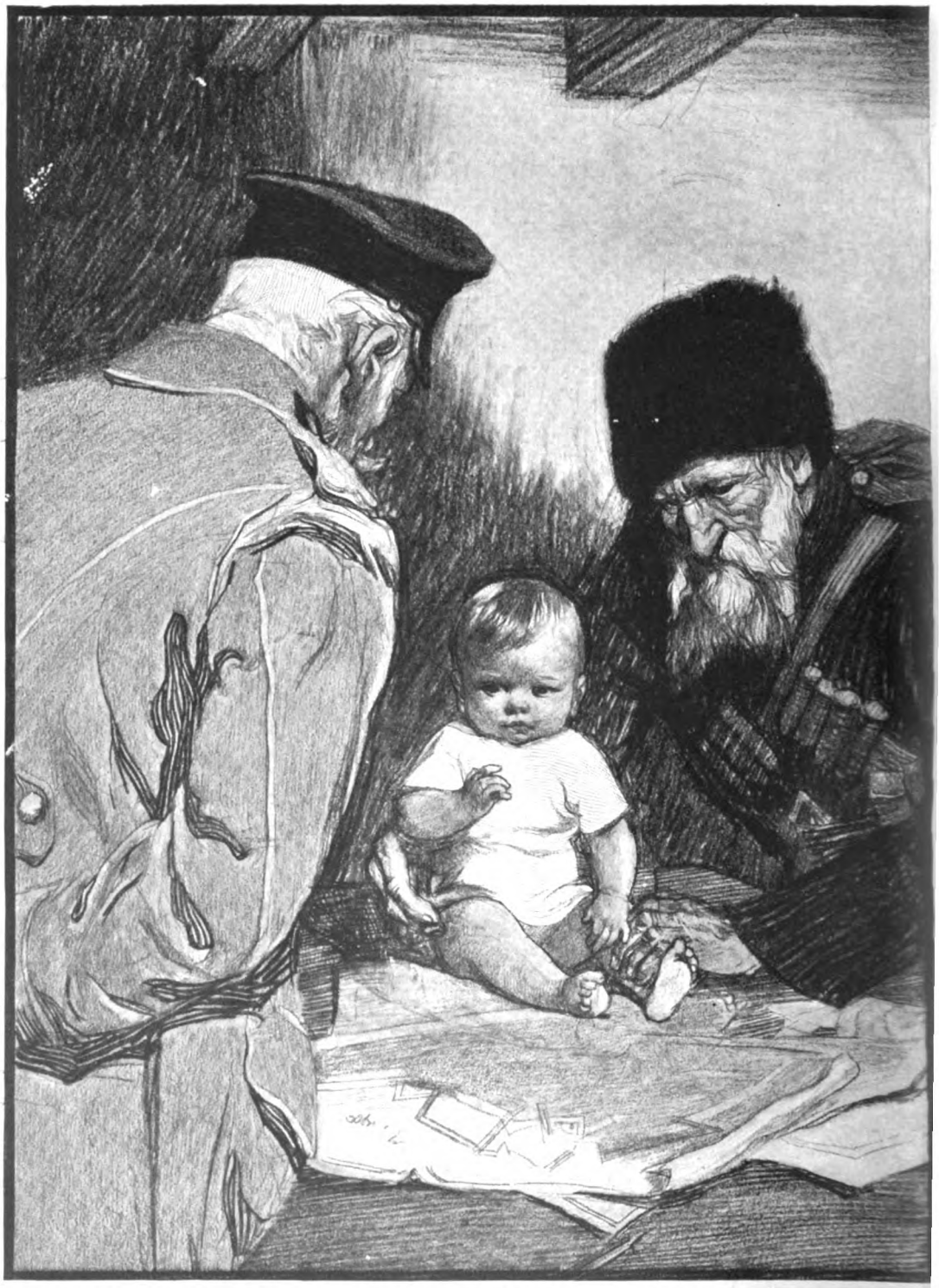
YOU might like to add to your Curiosity collection the enclosed letter returned to me undeliverable because it fell into a tin of tar. The Post Office authorities kept it some days, apparently for the tar to dry, before sending it back to me at the House of Commons.—Joseph King, M.P., Sandhouse, Witley.

ANSWER TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLE.

LAST month we invited our readers to solve the following :—

"A private is, strictly speaking, supposed, when he meets an officer, to commence the salute three paces before he meets him and to remain at the salute for three paces after he has passed him. Therefore, for how many paces altogether would he remain at the salute, supposing both to be walking at the same rate?"

SOLUTION.—The natural impulse is to answer that it must be for six paces, and this is what most people will say; but a little consideration will show that, presuming the officer is approaching the private at the same rate as that at which the latter is moving, the actual number of paces the private will have time to take before he meets the officer is one and one-half, although he commences to salute at three paces from him. After he has passed the officer he will remain at the salute for the three paces, the rate of movement of himself and the officer in this case making no difference, as the private cannot see the other, so that the correct answer is four and one-half paces.



"THE OLD COSSACK VERY CAREFULLY SET THE BABY DOWN ON THE TABLE AMONG THE MAPS"

(*See page* 251.)

MERCANTILE LIBRARY.
NEW YORK.

BOGDAN SHIPKIN.

From the Russian of V. NEMIROVICH-DANCHENKO

By ALDER ANDERSON.

Illustrated by Warwick Reynolds.

In a recent number we published a story entitled "The Rules of War," by Vasili Nemirovich-Danchenko, which was, we believe, the first introduction to readers in this country of a writer who is one of the best-known of all novelists to Russian readers. Of that story we said that it was a characteristic specimen, "beautiful with human sympathy, like all his work"—a remark which is equally applicable to this one.

For the information of readers who may have missed the story referred to, we also repeat here a slight sketch of the Author. Born in 1848, his earliest years were passed in garrison towns in Daghestan and Georgia, and his education was completed in the Alexandrovski military school in Moscow. Literature, however, attracted him rather than soldiering, and his first sketches, published when he was barely out of his teens, stamped him as belonging to the true race of writers. In 1877, on the outbreak of war with Turkey, by the side of his friend Skobeleff, he went through the whole terrible campaign, in which he gained the Cross of St. George for personal valour. His correspondence from the Front brought him immediate fame, and the volume of personal reminiscences of the "White General" is a classic of its kind. At the present moment he is acting as representative of a Russian newspaper at the Front.

THE last golden glow of sunset seemed to linger tenderly on snow-clad mountain peak and glistening white minaret as night crept slowly over gorge and valley and crag of the naked Balkans.

Gradually the dusky shroud was drawn over everything, until the whole grand panorama resembled the Titanic altar of some stern pagan deity, in whose honour human blood had been poured out on these heights for the past six months.

But now all the giant engines of war had become silent. Here and there a solitary sentry stared into the darkness, eyes and ears strained to the utmost. Fitful snatches of song came from the Russian trenches, and the sentry as he listened felt still more lonely, still more heart-sore. His own feelings lent significance to the music. Now it is a child he hears sobbing in its mother's arms, now a mother mourning her lost boy.

Over there is the valley of Kazanlik, which Turkish poets describe as a smile fallen from Heaven. The Bulgarian calls it the Kingdom of Roses. In spring and summer the scent of the immense sea of flowers is so pungent that it sends the blood to the head and provokes giddiness in all who pass that way. The gem of this earthly Paradise is the little village of Imitli, hidden amid groves of poplar and vine and quince, and filled with the soft, slumbrous gurgling of countless mountain springs, clear as crystal and icy-cold even on the hottest day of summer.

The inhabitants of Imitli are all Mussulmans, but to-night the Bashi-Bazouks have brought in from Haskio, in the forest near Shipka, some Christian prisoners—Stoian Doneff, a Bulgarian village schoolmaster and his wife, Radonitza.

The woman's clothing and poor ornaments have been torn from her with brutal violence. If she has striven to bear her torments with resignation, it is solely for the sake of the unconscious human atom she is holding in her arms. The infant smiles into its mother's anguished eyes, and into the grinning faces of the fiends whose cruel whips are goading the wretched woman on.

"Where are they taking us?" Radonitza asked her husband.

Shrinking under the blows that fall on his own back without intermission, Stoian could only frown silently.

"What do they mean to do with us?" the woman continued, as if addressing the question to herself this time.

"Listen, Rado," her husband spoke at last in short, staccato sentences. "When they hang me, strangle the child with your own hands, that he may not live to be an enemy to our Faith and our people. You hear, Rado? You understand, dear heart?"

Only too well did Radonitza understand! She pressed the infant still closer to her bosom, heavy tears falling on the chubby little hands that stretched up to her face.

In Imitli, the prisoners were at once brought before the Pasha.

"Well, dog of a Christian, what is your crime?" asked the Pasha, accompanying his question with a kick.

"I don't know, Pasha."

"Low blood always tells, dog. Leman Pasha would not allow any of you to be touched, but, thanks be to Allah, he is dead now, and there is no one to protect you. Silence, dog! If I hear a single word from you—one word, do you hear?—I'll have you and your whole brood wiped out! So you appealed to the Russians, did you?"

"We did not."

"But you are glad they're coming—it's all the same. What are you?"

"A schoolmaster."

"The rottenest breed of any. It is from you, schoolmasters and priests, that all the mischief comes. Understand this: if you refuse to serve me and the Sultan, I shall know how to deal with you."

"I will serve no one but God and my own people, Pasha."

"Brave words! If I didn't need you, I'd have you and your brood burnt this very instant, out there, in the yard."

"My soul is in the hands of God."

"And your body, dog? That shall be thrown to the hungry curs, as mangy and as treacherous as you are."

"Unless by the will of God, not one hair of my head may fall! If death does come to me, it is His will. Before God, I am innocent Pasha, as I am before you. I have done nothing wrong."

"You can talk, that is clear. But that does not affect me. Listen! The Russians are coming—we know it. You are a Bulgarian, and they will not distrust you. Go and find out how many there are in Gabrovo, where they are going to, and what road they are taking."

"I cannot do that, Pasha."

"You refuse to serve the Sultan, do you?"

"I cannot be a spy, Pasha."

"Which means that you are for the Russians!"

Stoian bent his head silently.

"Speak, dog!"

"Let me answer for him, Pasha," said Radonitza, stepping forward. "I will tell you what is in his mind and what, out of pity for me, he is keeping back. I am but a weak woman, Pasha, but I am not afraid of death. If my husband became a spy and betrayed the Russians to you, I would strangle his child with my own hands."

"Oh, you serpent!"

"No, Pasha, not a serpent! Why should

"'KILL US' SHE CONTINUED. 'WE WILL DIE LAUGHING, THINKING OF OUR FUTURE TRIUMPH.'"

you insult me? You threaten us with death. Well, here we are! Kill us, if you like. We do not treasure life so highly! But"—she straightened herself—"but, Pasha, neither priest nor schoolmaster shall do your bidding. What can you do to us? You can but kill us!" She made a gesture with her hands, as if throwing her worthless life at his feet.

"Our faith forbids us to commit suicide," quietly interposed Stoian, "or we should be already in our graves. That is the only reason why we submit to dishonour and oppression."

"Oh, if only we had arms!" exclaimed Radonitza. "If only we had arms! We would die defending our homes, our people. But what can we do with empty hands against your soldiers?"

"I like you, Hanoum!" said the Pasha, with a smile. "No Bulgarian has ever dared to speak to me like this before."

With a passionate movement Radonitza stooped and picked up some dust from the ground.

"Look, Pasha: a few more days now, and the fate of Turkey will be like this——"

She blew the dust from her hand as she spoke.

Some of it fell on to the Pasha's sleeve; he quietly shook it off.

"Kill us!" she continued. "We will die laughing, thinking of our future triumph."

Then, as if spent by her passion, she took the child from her husband and rocked it in her arms. The lioness was now only a mother. Her eyes grew dim, her head drooped.

"Enough of this jabber! I'm not here to talk to women. Listen—effendi," he turned ironically to Stoian. "Obey me and all shall be well with you; otherwise, blame yourself——" he paused, as though reflecting. "Look here, effendi, you are free. Go where you will."

In utter bewilderment Radonitza raised her head.

"May I go with him?" She spoke very humbly now.

"No. You shall stay here. If, within five days, your husband does not bring me news of the Russians from Gabrovo, I shall burn you and your brat—and," he spoke to himself, "if he does bring me news, I shall hang you both to the glory of Allah!"

"Go, Stoian!" Radonitza whispered in Bulgarian. "Go, my beloved! There is no hope for me. The Russians will give you arms. You will avenge us! Go!"

But, when she saw him pass the threshold, her eyes filled with tears and she gazed long after him.

"Curse you, cruel vultures!" she hissed into the Pasha's face as she was led away.

They locked her up with her child in an empty mud hut, where she collapsed in a corner and sat for hours, motionless, asking herself in an agony of fear what would happen to her. Would they burn her alive, or worse? To intensify her misery the hungry baby began to whimper. She had nothing to give it.

"Hanoum!"

Radonitza turned with a start.

Unheard by her, the door had opened, and a tall, uncouth-looking Turkish soldier stood before her. His rough, red face was deeply scored and seamed, and under an enormous nose, shaped like the beak of a bird of prey, bristled an unkempt beard and whiskers. The red fez had slipped far back, disclosing the bald bluish scalp. The ears, which stuck out from the head, gave the final touch of coarseness to a repulsive countenance.

"Are you hungry?" he asked, roughly, approaching Radonitza.

"My child is hungry."

"Then why don't you feed it?"

She averted her face while the soldier appeared to examine the wall with great attention. Then, removing his gaze to his pock-marked fingers, suddenly, with an awkward movement, he pushed one of them into the baby's little fist.

"Oh, you mite!" he mumbled, in a gruff voice.

Next, in a shamefaced way, he produced a kind of scone, broke off a small piece, chewed it, and put it in the baby's mouth.

Choking and panting, the baby, nevertheless, swallowed it.

"Well, why don't you feed it? What sort of a mother do you call yourself?" he asked, angrily, producing another scone. "The Pasha treats you far too well. I'd know what to do with you if I were in his place. Here! Take this and eat!"

Radonitza stretched out her hand instinctively, but immediately drew it back again.

"No, I won't!"

"Eat!"

"Leave me alone! What does it matter whether I die to-day or to-morrow?"

"And what about the child? Do you mean to starve it?"

Quite unexpectedly the Turk took the baby from her arms and began to feed it, first chewing the scone, bit by bit, himself.

Radonitza watched him in silence for a long time.

"THE TURK TOOK THE BABY AND BEGAN TO FEED IT."

At last she said:—

"How can I thank you? Turks are all cruel to us Christians. I have not seen a man like you before."

"Shut up!" he retorted, looking very fierce. "In Aleppo I have a whole yard full of mites like that. It is two years since I saw them or heard of them. I have a wife, too. She is as young as you are. Why," he broke off abruptly, "why don't you adopt our Faith?"

"We each follow our own road——"

"Yours is a rotten road. You are Kaffirs—it is a sin to speak to you even——"

"Why do you speak, then?"

"Have I not told you that you remind me of my wife and children? How can I help it? Soon," his tone became very

conciliatory, "soon, the Sultan in his goodness—may Allah prolong his days!—will order us to exterminate you all."

In spite of the man's words Radonitza, quite reassured now, began to eat a scone herself.

"Will your husband be back soon?" the Turk asked.

"He will never return."

"What do you mean? Where can he go?"

"He will join the Bulgarian militia."

"Good! Every man ought to fight. But what will happen to you?"

"They will burn me."

"And your mite also?"

"Yes——"

"Oh, you dogs! Why not come over to us and remain alive? The mite there will grow up to be a good Turkish soldier and serve the Sultan."

"Rather than that he should live to go against the Bulgarians, I would, myself, strangle him," said Radonitza, passionately.

"You would, would you?"

The soldier lingered, as if uncertain what to do. At last he went out, looked about him, hesitated, walked round the yard, and, finally, began to smash the fence.

The woman stared at him, amazed.

When he had finished his work of destruction, he moved awkwardly, almost bashfully, to the window.

"Hanoum!"

"Well?"

"If I break the window, you will go away in the night to the Russians, eh? And you will take the mite with you, eh?"

Radonitza could not at first grasp the meaning of his words. Then, suddenly the truth dawned upon her, and, obeying an irresistible impulse, she caught hold of the hard, horny hand and pressed it to her lips.

"Let go—let me go, Christian woman, or I'll leave you at once!"

He pressed his powerful shoulders against the wooden bars of the window, so that the whole frame crashed out, carrying part of the wall with it.

"Good-bye, Christian woman! I shall lock the door and watch outside."

"But what about you? The Pasha——?"

"That's all right. I have a medal for Karadag. No one will hurt me."

A minute or two later Radonitza heard him singing of his home at Aleppo, his voice blending with the murmur of the streams.

Pressing her child close to her breast, hardly daring to breathe, Radonitza crept stealthily from her prison, and in the bitter cold started on her long, solitary journey.

The moon shed a brilliant light and, for a long time, the woman's violet shadow zigzagged up and down the slopes, before it finally disappeared from view.

Slowly and laboriously, the Cossacks advanced in single file. The horses, knee-deep in snow, snorted noisily and made desperate efforts to find a firm foothold on the rock. The faces of the score of stalwart men, swaying in the saddles, were smarting under the driving snow, which filled nose and mouth and ear. In places the drifts were so deep that the leading rider would almost disappear, and the others had to go to his rescue.

"Here's a night to be out in," he growled.

Towards the summit of the pass the way was somewhat easier. The storm, too, was noticeably abating.

"It will be all over by morning," said the weather prophet of the little troop.

Painfully, the Cossacks scrambled up the ice-bound slope. At length the troop reached the first plateau, and the men, breathing stertorously after their exertions, threw themselves down on the snow for a brief rest, retaining their hold on the bridles the while.

Overhead, the sky had already begun to pale; a few stars only were now visible. The deep ravines, however, were still steeped in blackness, though the wider valleys, filled with the mist that accompanies dawn, looked like stormy lakes, the eternal mountains brooding over them.

There came a minute of intense stillness, when everything was steeped in lazy slumber. Then the wind seemed slowly to reawaken. It sighed among the branches, scattering the frozen snowflakes, and with a low, soft whistle, passed on into the ravines, finally dying away in the valleys.

"Well, brother," said one Cossack to another, "it seems to me we might return. We've seen about all there is to see."

"Yes! Look at the Turkish lines over there. We've got them in the hollow of our hand. They *have* dug themselves in."

"The devils always burrow as deep as they can—just like moles they are."

The enemy's lines stood out in bold relief. Suddenly the sleepy camp wakened into life. Immediately after, a muffled rumble boomed through the gorges and echoed and re-echoed among the mountains. Then, as the Russians did not reply, the camp once more relapsed into slumber, save for the occasional dry crack of a rifle, as much as to say:—

"There's one for you! Take that!"

"Without his guns the Turk is no good," said a Cossack. "In the open he's not worth a copeck."

"I don't know so much about that."

"What do you mean? I speak of what I know. I've seen him at work."

"So have I."

"Where?"

"On the ninth of August."

"That affair does not count. They were all drunk that day."

Once more the Cossacks are in the saddle, moving forward. Conditions are much better. The wind no longer lashes their faces nor throws the horses from the slippery path.

The officer, looking about him, is at the head of the troop.

"Have the Turks guessed what is being prepared for them?" he asks himself. "Have they dug treacherous holes and mines? Have they placed a masked battery anywhere, which will sow death in the ranks of all who come unsuspectingly within its range?"

No! He can detect nothing!

"God is going to give us a fine warm day," says a man, critically examining the horizon.

"Halt!" The officer's voice raps out the word sharply. "What's that?"

All the Cossacks rein in their horses. In the still morning air, the jingling of the silver accoutrements and the impatient pawing of hoofs sound with extraordinary distinctness.

"It must have been my fancy—no, there it is again."

"Sounds like a baby crying," said the sergeant.

"Idiot! How can there be a baby here? Now, men, to the right."

Following the officer, the troop started anew.

"It *is* a baby," said the sergeant. "I can hear it plainly now."

By this time the eastern horizon was ablaze. Crimson flames were spreading all over the mountain tops.

"That's where it comes from."

"PRESSING HER CHILD CLOSE TO HER BREAST, RADONITZA CREPT STEALTHILY FROM HER PRISON."

A man pointed to a small snow-covered heap in the middle of the plateau. "See what it is God is sending us."

A moment later the Cossacks were all clustering round the heap.

"Good Lord! What's this?

"Oh, you poor thing!"

Before the men lay Radonitza, stark and stiff.

The storm had covered her with a light mantle of snow. Even after they had lifted the baby, the poor mother's frozen hands still pressed the burden to her cold heart.

"Poor thing! Poor thing!" muttered a dozen voices.

"Well, anyway, we sha'n't go back quite empty-handed," said one. "We've found something we didn't bargain for."

"God means to send us luck," said another. "A baby always brings luck."

"That's so."

"What the deuce is the meaning of it? Exhaustion, like enough. That does happen. Running away from the infernal Turks, I suppose. But God has saved the child at least."

Meanwhile the baby seemed to be examining each of the bearded men in turn. Then it stared at the great red disc of the rising sun, then at the tree-tops. Its chubby little hands and feet waved about in the air like the legs of a grasshopper on its back.

"Oh, you funny little beggar! There's one for you!" said an old Cossack, tickling its neck.

The baby seized the man's finger and put it into its mouth.

"Silly kid!" The grey-bearded man laughed. "Well, boys," he continued, in a graver voice, "shall we bury the mother, or not?"

"Leave it for the infantry when they pass later."

"All right! Back we go then."

Then came a chorus of cries:—

"Take care of the kid."

"We're all going shares in it."

"Turn and turn about to carry it."

"No cheating."

"I'll shove it inside my coat now and give it some biscuit," said the old Cossack.

With infinite care, the grey-bearded man arranged the baby within his breast, covering it up as well as he could. He gave it some biscuit to eat, and in its warm nest it soon fell asleep. Each time it gave signs of being awake the same remarks were made:—

"There's a throat for you! Shout, young 'un, shout! You'll be all the stronger for it."

"Let me have him now, Simon, it's my turn."

"No; I'll keep him a bit longer."

"I can carry him as well as you."

Nervously gnawing the ends of his moustache, the white-haired General paced up and down the big, dimly-lit mud hut that served him as headquarters. Now and again he paused in front of the table, which was littered with plans of the Shipka and with staff officers' reports. He was lost in reflection for a few moments. Then he resumed his interminable promenade.

On a stool near the door sat his orderly officer. He could with difficulty keep his eyes open.

"Lie down, Petroff. Have a rest," said the General, in a kindly tone.

"It is all right, your Excellency. It's only the heat that's affecting me."

"As you please! What are the Cossacks up to? Let's hope I haven't sent them to their death."

Petroff rose from his seat and opened the door.

"No sign of them yet. They haven't an easy job."

"I know that."

Water ran down the walls of the hut and dropped continuously from the ceiling on the maps and plans. Occasionally, a big drop splashed on the General's face, who, apparently, looked on such a state of affairs as quite normal. A single guttering candle feebly lit up the corners and the small camp-bed, which was soaked through and through. Great pools lay on the floor.

The General, absorbed in his maps, was now seated at the table. The rustle of the papers and the drip-drip of the falling water were the only sounds audible.

Suddenly voices were heard outside.

"See what it is, Petroff?"

The orderly rose with alacrity, but before he reached the door it was pushed open, and the Cossack officer entered. He was covered with snow from head to foot. His eyebrows and beard were hard frozen.

"Thank God! At last!" said the General. "Well——?"

"I have the honour to report that——"

"Did you go the whole way?"

"Yes, your Excel——"

"Can the guns get through?"

"Possibly, if the infan——"

"And the cavalry?"

"With difficulty. But they might manage."

The General looked as if a load had been removed from his shoulders.

"Well, thanks for your good news. Come across the Turks?"

"No, your Excellency."

"So you found nothing?"

"Not exactly nothing—the men——"

"Well?"

"May they report to your Excellency themselves? It is not quite a Cossack business."

"All right! Call them in." The General's interest was already aroused.

One by one, the men stumbled into the hut and stood at attention near the door, as if petrified. The coat of the grey-bearded Cossack bulged unusually at the breast.

"Well, men, I hear you found something?"

In great confusion the Cossacks furtively exchanged glances.

"Well, have you all lost your tongues?"

But the "find" answered for itself. In the warm room, the contact of the rough cloth had begun to irritate it, and it struggled to get out, digging its hands into the Cossack's chest and roaring lustily.

"Here's a nice how-de-do," said the bewildered General.

The old Cossack stepped forward, took the baby out of his coat, and very carefully set it down on the table among the maps.

"Here's a nice how-de-do," repeated the General, quite at a loss. Then he began to scratch the baby behind the ear, as he might have done to a puppy. After that he put a finger into its mouth, but the little gums nipped it so hard that, with an awkward laugh, he quickly pulled it out.

"Here's a nice how-de-do!" was still the only comment he could make.

The baby, wriggling with its hands and feet, was about to emit another roar when the light of the candle suddenly caught its attention and it changed its mind. Pursing up its lips in the shape of a little trumpet, it gazed intently at the flame.

"Shall we give it some brandy?" asked the General.

"They don't drink brandy," the old Cossack declared, respectfully.

"Is there no milk?"

"No, your Excellency. They are very fond of rusks, though."

"Right! What have you decided to do with it? Shall we give it to the Bulgarians or send it to Gabrovo?"

"We would like to keep it, your Excellency, if we may. God has sent it to us for luck."

"How will you feed it?"

"By hand, your Excellency."

"H'm! I don't know how that will work," said the General, thoughtfully. "Anyhow, you can't all feed it; you'll have to choose a nurse. Too many cooks—I mean, twenty Cossacks—what a sturdy little beggar it is, to be sure."

"We have thought of that, your Excellency. We mean to give him one nurse, but we shall all provide food for him."

"Who is to be the nurse?"

"He shall choose for himself, your Excellency."

"Well, I never! And how, pray, can a baby choose?"

"The one he smiles at first shall be the nurse."

"Well, well, so be it! Let us see." The General himself was intensely interested now.

One by one the rough, bearded Cossack faces, rendered still more uncouth than usual by the rigours of a hard Balkan winter, bent over the baby. Kindly eyes looked from under shaggy brows, but the baby, annoyed each time that a burly shape hid the candle from its view, only wriggled about more and more uneasily, and beat the air with its hands and feet.

Finally it was the grey-bearded Cossack's turn to approach. He came up sideways, so that the light of the candle hit the baby once more in the eye. The puckered little features relaxed at once into a smile.

"Mine, brothers, it's mine," cried the old man, joyfully, gathering the baby into his arms and hiding it once more within his coat.

"It's yours, right enough, that's a fact," exclaimed all the others in chorus.

"You're a lot of duffers," said the General, beaming at them. "Well, men, here's something for luck."

"Many thanks and long live your Excellency!"

"What are you going to make of him?"

"A Cossack. We'll make *such* a Cossack of him!"

"And what will you call him?"

The men had not thought of that. They were at a loss for an answer.

"I suggest the name of Shipkin," said the General. "You found him on the Shipka. Let him be called Shipkin."

"And as God sent him, your Excellency, let us christen him Bogdan" (God given).

"Splendid! Well, good-bye, Bogdan Shipkin. Grow up to be a credit to Russian arms. Good-bye, men, and many thanks."

"Happy to serve your Excellency," heartily replied the men. And Bogdan Shipkin, the future Cossack, was triumphantly carried out of the General's mud hut into the bright light of a new, heaven-sent day.

Our readers will share our regret at the great loss occasioned by the death of Sir James Murray, which occurred after this article had gone to press.

THE STRANGE CASE OF DR. MINOR.

AN EXTRAORDINARY STORY OF REAL LIFE THAT IS CONNECTED WITH THE GREATEST LITERARY TASK EVER UNDERTAKEN.

By HAYDEN CHURCH.

SOMEWHERE on the other side of the Atlantic—I am not at liberty to state just where, though possibly the publication of this article may lead to its being voluntarily revealed—there is living quietly with his kinsfolk an elderly man who is the central figure in the strangest story that has been told for many a long day.

This story, which is now related in print for the first time, is closely connected with what is undoubtedly one of the greatest, if not actually the greatest work of a literary kind ever undertaken, namely, the production of the "New English Dictionary," or "Murray's English Dictionary," as it has come to be called after its distinguished editor, Sir James A. H. Murray. It was begun as long ago as 1857, and is not completed yet, though Sir James tells me that, in spite of the war, which has cut him off entirely from his German correspondents, he hopes to complete the tenth and last of his mighty volumes, namely "T to Z," some time in the present year.

THE FAMOUS EDITOR OF "MURRAY'S ENGLISH DICTIONARY."
SIR JAMES MURRAY, WHO DISCOVERED THAT A MYSTERIOUS CONTRIBUTOR TO HIS GREAT WORK WAS AN INMATE OF BROADMOOR.
Photo. Hills & Saunders, Oxford.

This is easily the biggest thing, in the dictionary line, anyway, ever undertaken. Just to collect the quotations which are used in it has engaged the energies of over thirteen hundred volunteer readers, resident all over the world, and since the work began they have turned in over three and a half millions of quotations, representing the works of over five thousand authors, of all periods.

The project of compiling the New English Dictionary originated in a resolution by the Philological Society of Great Britain, in 1857, the mover of which was the late Archbishop Trent. The original plan was that the Philological

Society should finance the work, but some years later the famous Oxford University Press undertook to do this, and to bring out the great dictionary. Meanwhile an appeal for volunteer readers was issued, and met with a large response. For several years the thing dragged along, two editors and many of the original projectors having, in the meanwhile, died. Finally, Sir James Murray was chosen as editor, and certainly no better man for directing the job could have been selected.

Sir James, who was knighted in 1908, has most of the alphabet after his name. He is a B.A. of London, an M.A. of Oxford, a Ph.D. of Freiburg, and a D.Litt. of Cape Town; also a member of the Institute of France, the Imperial Academy of Sciences, Vienna, the Royal Prussian Academy, the Royal Flemish Academy, the American Philosophical Society, and ever so many more learned bodies. Born in Scotland, in 1837, he has many profound works to his credit, and is the author of the article on "The English Language" in the "Encyclopædia." You will gather that what Sir James doesn't know about words nobody does, and of all his many distinctions, that of which he is avowedly proudest is that of editor of the greatest of all dictionaries.

When he took charge he found himself confronted with a formidable job, some two million quotations having already been got together, and needing to be sorted and classified. Sir James tackled the job energetically, however, and, for the first five years, carried on his labours at The Scriptorium, Mill Hill, near London, eventually, however (in 1885), transferring his headquarters and staff to Oxford, where the making of the dictionary has gone on ever since. And so, with these necessary preliminaries, to our story, which might well be deemed incredible were it not abundantly authenticated.

It was Sir James Murray's custom, whenever he was ready to start on a new word (and the genesis of a single one mostly takes up several pages in the "New English Dictionary") to send it out to all of his army of volunteer readers, who forthwith supplied the earliest possible quotation which they could discover in which the word in question was used.

When this had been going on for a time, Sir James discovered that some of the most valuable quotations that reached him, together with some of the most scholarly comments thereupon, were forwarded by a certain Dr. W. C. Minor, who wrote from Crowthorne, a small village in Berkshire. This contributor's identity puzzled Sir James more than a little, the more so as he soon came to realize that the latter's knowledge of the subject of philology could not be far behind his own. So much did Sir James esteem the mysterious Dr. Minor, in fact, that whenever he had completely finished his analysis of the history of any one word, he was in the habit of sending the full notes connected therewith to his correspondent in Crowthorne for his final revision, which, more often than not, was productive of some important addition or exceedingly illuminating criticism or other comment.

For many months this went on. Eventually, so much did Sir James feel himself and Oxford University in the debt of the mysterious *savant* (regarding whose social status the distinguished lexicographer could not make even a guess) that he one day approached the University heads and pointed out that it would, so he considered, be a graceful and well-merited act on their part if an invitation were sent to the Berkshire *savant* asking him to be the guest of the University for a week, during which time every possible honour should be paid to him.

The powers-that-be at the University readily agreed, and the invitation was sent. In due course a reply was received from Dr. Minor, in which he expressed his deep appreciation of the invitation, which he described as the greatest honour ever shown him, but regretted profoundly that it was impossible for him to accept it. This reply came as a considerable disappointment to Sir James Murray, who had looked forward with keen pleasure to hob-nobbing with his unknown colleague, who, he now surmised, must be a poor man, unable to bear the expense of the proposed journey.

Accordingly, on behalf of he University, Sir James wrote once more, explaining that if the question of expense was the stumbling-block, Dr. Minor was to understand that their invitation began on his doorstep and ended there, and that all parties concerned hoped sincerely that he would not deprive them of the privilege of entertaining him.

The doctor's reply came promptly. He stated that the reasons which made it impossible for him to visit the University were not financial but physical ones. He added, however, that as it would give him the keenest pleasure to have an opportunity of making the acquaintance of Dr. Murray, he

begged that the proposition should be reversed, and that Dr. Murray would be his guest for a day or two, and this at as early a date as the latter could manage. Dr. Minor added that he personally could not come to the station to greet his guest, but that he would send his carriage. Sir James, being by this time overpoweringly curious as to his correspondent's identity, promptly accepted the proposition, and, a few days later, took train for Crowthorne.

After a journey of a couple of hours, he arrived at the nearest railway-station thereto, namely, Wellington College, and was met by a liveried servant, who asked if he were Dr. Murray, and on receiving an affirmative answer, explained that he came from Dr. Minor, and led the way to a handsome brougham, drawn by two fine horses, which was waiting near at hand. Sir James entered the brougham, and, after a ride of a couple of miles, found himself being driven into the courtyard of a huge brick building, of a forbidding appearance, as to whose character he could not even make a surmise.

"Have the kindness to follow me, sir," said the servant, and straightway conducted the puzzled *savant* up a gloomy staircase and through a corridor, ushering him eventually into a well-appointed private office, at which a man of unmistakably official appearance was sitting at a desk.

The latter promptly arose and greeted his visitor with impressive politeness.

"Dr. Minor, I presume?" ventured the puzzled philologist.

"No, Dr. Murray," replied the unknown, "I am not Dr. Minor, but he is here; and meanwhile I don't suppose you have the slightest idea where you are. This is Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum, and I am the Governor."

Dr. Murray stood speechless.

"I had better explain at once," continued the Governor, "that Dr. Minor, with whom you have been corresponding, is an inmate of this institution. He is, in fact, an inmate who has stood his trial for murder." (Sir James gasped.) "Dr. Minor is a citizen of the United States," the Governor went on, "and when he came to us he was not in his right mind. Since that time, however, he has to all intents and purposes recovered his sanity. He is, as you have discovered, a man of great brilliancy and uncommon learning. Upon recovering his mental balance, he requested to be permitted to have books, to which we readily consented, and, as he is a member of a wealthy family in the United States, he has been able to provide himself with an exceptionally fine library. He always, it appears, has made a hobby of words and their history, and he has taken the keenest interest in his work in connection with your Dictionary. To-day he is substantially as sane as you or I, and, having been here for many years, he is, needless to say, treated like anyone but an ordinary inmate. And now, if you are not unnerved by what I have told you, I will take you to the doctor, who is waiting for you with great eagerness. But stay. Perhaps before I do so, I had better acquaint you with the details of the act for which Dr. Minor was committed to Broadmoor."

This is the story which the Governor of Broadmoor, England's great criminal lunatic asylum, related while Dr. Murray sat before him, spell-bound:—

It begins in the early days of the American Civil War, namely, in 1861, when Dr. William Charles Minor, then a young surgeon of twenty-six, joined the Army of the North in his professional capacity, with the rank of captain. Dr. Minor, who was tall and good-looking, was a member of the New York College of Surgeons, and had not long been married. He belonged to a wealthy family, and was both naturally talented and exceptionally well educated, among other things being an unusually clever artist and painter. He had many acquaintances among men of culture, one of whom, a professor at Yale University, was able to give him, when ten years later he set off on what was to prove an ill-fated journey to Europe, a letter of introduction to John Ruskin himself.

Soon after Dr. Minor joined the Army, it became his duty to brand a deserter. The latter accused him of having carried out this duty with unnecessary severity, and the incident evidently made a deep impression upon the young surgeon, though it did not upset him unduly. Some time later, however, having in the meantime served with great credit, Dr. Minor had a sunstroke, the consequences of which were serious. He was, in fact, so completely unbalanced that it was alike impossible to continue in the army or, upon quitting it, to pursue his profession or any course of study.

His malady took the form of delusions, one of these being that, because of the branding which he had been compelled to do, he himself was, as he expressed it, a "marked man." He feared, too, attacks upon himself, his supposedly would-be assailants being in his imagination always Irish, these being the

times of the Fenian outbreaks. In the hope of a cure, at his brother's advice, he entered an institution for the insane at New Haven, Connecticut, and remained there a year or two (this was in 1869), but came out with his delusions as strong as ever. No one deemed him in the slightest degree dangerous, however, and he lived in his brother's house for some time afterwards. In these years he practically devoted himself to drawing and painting, and produced some extremely fine work.

Eventually, in the autumn of 1871, following the advice of his friends, Dr. Minor started on a visit to Europe, from which it was hoped he would derive benefit. He travelled alone, being well supplied with money, and carrying exceptional letters of introduction, one of these, as has been said, being addressed to John Ruskin. In this letter, its author, a Yale professor, explained to Ruskin that the doctor hoped to regain complete possession of his health, and that he desired to make sketches and paintings of the beautiful scenery of England.

Arrived in London, Dr. Minor took lodgings in Lambeth, his address there being 41, Tenison Street—a little thoroughfare off the York Road, which is, of course, close to the Thames. At the American's subsequent trial his landlady testified that for a month or two after his arrival, namely, in December and January, his behaviour was quite normal. Then, however, he suddenly began sleeping out, returning in an unsettled condition of mind. Shortly afterwards, it seems, the doctor presented himself at the local police-station and there made "wild and incoherent complaints" of persecution from the Irish, who, he said, had persecuted him in America and continued to do so here. He also wrote a letter to the police, in which he said, "My life may be taken any night. I trust your agents are not to be bought over, as the American ones are."

WHERE DR. MINOR LIVED IN LONDON. NO 41, TENISON STREET, LAMBETH.

The police authorities recognized that the doctor was mentally deranged, but did not believe him dangerous. It was thought well, however, to communicate with his friends in America, and this was done—too late, as it proved. For the next act was a tragic one.

In the Belvedere Road, Lambeth, close to Hungerford Bridge, a few hundred yards from Dr. Minor's lodgings, stood, and still stands, a large brewery known as the "Lion." On the night of February 17th, 1872, about two o'clock in the morning, Dr. Minor, who was then absent from his rooms almost nightly, was returning home, evidently in a highly excited condition. The night was clear and starlit. Close to the gates of the brewery, the American suddenly encountered one of the *employés* there, George Merritt, a stoker, who was then going to his work. Suddenly three shots rang out, and the nearest policeman rushed to the scene to find Dr. Minor standing with a smoking revolver in his hand.

"Who fired those shots?" demanded the policeman.

"I did," replied the American, with complete calmness, coming forward. "I've killed a man. He's lying back there."

By this time another officer arrived and, going in the direction indicated by the American, he found the unfortunate stoker's body. Death, resulting from one bullet-wound in the neck and another in the back, had been practically instantaneous. The doctor, whom the policeman described as entirely cool and self-possessed, was disarmed, arrested, and at once conveyed to Southwark police-station, where he was imprisoned. He then appeared quite indifferent. On being searched, it was discovered that besides

being in possession of the revolver, which bore the name of a maker in Springfield, Connecticut, the doctor was armed with a "bowie" knife, which he wore in a sheath attached to his braces.

At his lodgings, besides a number of letters of introduction, including the one to John Ruskin already mentioned, were found a quantity of beautifully-executed paintings of London and the surrounding district.

The affair made a great sensation. The promiscuous carrying and frequent use of firearms by Americans travelling in England had become more or less of a scandal, and the attitude of the London Press towards Dr. Minor was frankly hostile.

THE WELL-KNOWN "LION BREWERY," WHERE DR. MINOR SHOT GEORGE MERRITT, A BREWERY STOKER.

Dr. Minor was tried at the Spring Assizes in the following April, the trial having been postponed to permit his wife, his brother, and other witnesses to reach England. The case was tried before Lord Chief Justice Bovill, the prosecution being represented by Mr. Denman, Q.C., and Mr. J. C. Mathew, and the prisoner by Sir (then Mr.) Edward Clarke. The proceedings were comparatively brief, the evidence of the prisoner's brother and wife (the latter's appearance excited great sympathy), as well as the evidence of the police, making it obvious that the act was that of a deranged man. There was the police letter to America, too, written before the crime, not to mention the fact that the prisoner and his victim were absolute strangers. The jury, after being charged by the Lord Chief Justice, brought in a verdict of "Not Guilty." Soon after Dr. Minor was taken to Broadmoor, there to be confined, "during Her Majesty's pleasure," as the official phrase then went.

Sir James Murray listened to this extraordinary tale with amazement mingled with sympathetic interest. When the end had been reached he begged the Governor to take him to Dr. Minor, and the meeting between the two men of learning who had corresponded for so long and who now met in such strange circumstances was an extremely impressive one. It is hard to say which of the two enthusiastic philologists derived most pleasure from their intercourse, which was also by no means without its fruitful results, so far as the Dictionary was concerned. They parted on the best of terms, Sir James placing himself at the service of his American *confrère* in any way in which his help could be useful, while Dr. Minor, on his side, promised to continue, to the best of his ability, his work for the Dictionary.

Dr. Minor's story, as set forth above, was related by Sir James Murray to a prominent official of the Oxford University Press, through whom it reached the present writer. The distinguished philologist, unhappily, has recently suffered a somewhat severe illness, involving, he tells me, a loss of six months' work, and thus has little time, at present, to give to anything but the completion of his great task. For this reason he felt unable to agree to an interview which I proposed, before completing my manuscript, in which the "i's" might be dotted and the "t's" crossed as to what appears above.

Sir James was able, however, to give me the highly-interesting information that Dr. Minor is still alive, in America. "His friends succeeded in taking him home a few years ago," Sir James writes, "and I correspond with him from time to time." Meanwhile I have been able to confirm all the details in connection with the American's trial, and as to his previous history by reference to the very full accounts in the files of the London

Times, two extracts from which are here reproduced in facsimile.

In these circumstances, it seemed well to discover what, if anything, Sir Edward Clarke, who defended Dr. Minor at his trial, could add to the story. Sir Edward was courtesy itself, and what he had to say proved both interesting and illuminating.

"I well remember every detail of the interesting case of Dr. Minor," said the great lawyer, as we talked in his chambers in Essex Court, Temple. "As you know, he was found 'Not Guilty,' according to the custom in those days (to-day he would have been found 'Guilty, but insane'), and he was at once sent to Broadmoor. I think that, had his friends desired, it probably could have been arranged for him to have been taken back to the United States, but they considered at the time that he would be as well looked after here as anywhere.

"Dr. Minor remained in Broadmoor for, I believe, nearly twenty-five years," added Sir Edward, "and then, largely in order that he might carry on his work for Sir James Murray under the best possible auspices, he was taken to the great private sanatorium at Virginia Water, where he had his library and was extremely comfortable. One of my personal friends, the late Dr. Christian Ginsburg, the renowned Hebrew scholar, who lived at Virginia Water, was a Visitor to the Sanatorium, and knew Dr. Minor well. He admired him intensely as a scholar, as well as personally. Some few years ago, it seems, Dr. Minor had a somewhat severe illness, and it was as a result of this that his relatives decided to take him back home to America."

Sir Edward explained that it was either in 1883 or 1884 that the practice in regard to bringing in a verdict upon a prisoner who had committed a cirme but had been proved of unsound mind was changed. It followed upon an attack upon the late Queen Victoria. Previously, as has been said, the prisoner was found "Not Guilty." Since the change, however, a prisoner has been found "Guilty, but insane."

Several years ago, in the preface to the Dictionary, Sir James placed it on record that Dr. Minor sent in "between five thousand and eight thousand quotations." The doctor's address is given simply as "Crowthorne, Berks."

At the time of his trial the doctor was thirty-seven, and must, therefore, now be about eighty.

Thus ends a tale which I think it will be agreed is "stranger than fiction." It is hardly necessary to say that, in here setting it forth for the first time, one is actuated by no desire to recall what had been forgotten. But to Dr. Minor's deed no criminality attached, and it remains to recognize more fully his part in the creation of a great work of learning. In telling his story, a humble step in that direction is taken. I do not pretend that the details here given are complete. Now that the foregoing has been published, however, perhaps we shall be privileged to hear Dr. Minor's extraordinary story from his own lips or pen.

SPRING ASSIZES.

HOME CIRCUIT.

KINGSTON, APRIL 4.

CROWN COURT.—(*Before Lord Chief Justice* BOVILL.)

William Charles Minor, a middle-aged man, was indicted for the murder of one George Merritt, at Lambeth, in February.

Mr. Denman, Q.C., and Mr. J. C. Mathew conducted the case for the prosecution; Mr. Edward Clarke defended the prisoner.

The LORD CHIEF JUSTICE.—Gentlemen,—If any one in his right senses kills another, he is *primâ facie* guilty of murder. And, *primâ facie*, every person must be presumed to be in his right senses, and therefore to be responsible for his acts. But this applies only in the absence of evidence of unsoundness of mind; and there is evidence here that the mind is unsound. Then it is so difficult to trace the workings of a mind which is unsound that the presumption no longer applies; and if the evidence satisfies you that the prisoner at the time he committed the act was not in a state to distinguish right from wrong, and was not capable of controlling his actions, then he would not be responsible for the act he committed, and you would find a verdict of not guilty on the ground of insanity, the effect of which will be that for the future he will be properly taken care of in order to prevent danger of further mischief.

The jury said they were quite satisfied, and returned a verdict accordingly of *Not Guilty*, on the ground of insanity.

FACSIMILE OF EXTRACTS FROM THE "TIMES."
THE FIRST SHOWS THE OPENING LINES OF THE DESCRIPTION OF THE TRIAL, AND THE SECOND THE JUDGE'S SUMMING-UP.

SAM BRIGGS BECOMES A SOLDIER.

IX.—In Their Own Gas.

By RICHARD MARSH.

Illustrated by Charles Pears.

FOR five days I was practically unable to move. Whether that horrible gas had had any poisoning effect upon my feet and legs, or whether the way those Germans had dragged me down the hill had done it, I cannot certainly say, but there I was, practically unable to move. You might not have thought there was any house left. There had been a flourishing farm a little time before, but the Germans had destroyed that, all that remained being a wall, some roof, and a chimney. You would not have guessed there was a room, but there was. You went round by a patch of evergreens and there you were in a sort of general living-room, rigged up by madame and her daughter, so far as I could judge, from the odds and ends the Germans had left about. By the way, I always was a bit shaky about the names out there, but Wiertje I believe the farm was called, and Swerts was madame's name. About the spelling I am not sure, but that was how her daughter pronounced the names to me.

"I was a waitress," Netta told me, "at the tea-shop in London, because my *fiancé* Henri was in London also. He was a chef in the employment of the company which owned the shop in which I was engaged. We proposed, Henri and I, to set up an establishment together. We were not quite sure where, and that was what we were in London for—to learn the business. Then came the war. Henri rushed back to fight; I went with him. My mother and my sister wanted me, particularly my sister. She was expecting a baby very soon. I went straight to her to her home close to the Luxembourg frontier. Two days after I arrived there came a German troop of soldiers. They destroyed the village with cannon. My brother-in-law had some garments which were part of an old uniform. He put them on. With other men in the village he had some idea of attempting to defend his home, his wife, his unborn babe. Exactly what happened I cannot say, but it seems that the Germans shot him in the street—found him with a gun in his possession. So they destroyed the whole village, together with the inhabitants, women, children, old and young. They shot my sister; I saw her fall. They burned her house. They would have killed me, only by some accident I escaped. I left everything behind which I possessed. I walked for eleven days; what I suffered cannot be told. At last I reached home. My brother was with the army. The afternoon of the day on which I returned we heard that he had been killed at Alost, and that my father was wounded at Louvain. They killed him when the fighting was over. It was sheer murder. My mother and I were alone. One day, happening to be in this part of the world, because they could find no fault with us, they set fire to our house. Those German soldiers, they are things unspeakable! They left us without a roof to cover us. Together, my mother and I have built up what you see; it is all we possess in the world. They are not soldiers, those Germans; they are murderers. It is those who are unable to defend themselves that they love to kill. Is it strange that my mother and I have both of us learnt how to use a gun? No German soldier shall come near us if we can help it. Does that cause you to wonder?"

I told her that it did not. I thought of Dora in the same position, to say nothing of Louisa. I pictured English women at the mercy of German soldiers. I did not doubt that they would make use of any weapon on which they could lay their hands rather than trust themselves to them.

The apartment which served the two women as living-room was of the smallest dimensions.

Towards the evening of my first day Netta, with a great show of secrecy, drawing aside a cupboard which she called an *armoire*, showed that behind it a piece of paper could be lifted from the wall as if it were a curtain, and behind it was a door. Quite what she did to it I never knew, but I know she induced it to open, and there was what looked as if it might be the entrance to a cellar. Into it she and her mother lifted me—that first day I couldn't move my feet—carrying me along until we reached some place where it was light enough to enable you to see.

"This," explained Netta, "is our hiding-place. Many people have hidden here when the Germans were looking for them outside. It is not luxurious—no, I do not suggest it—but it can be made more comfortable than you would think."

She was right; I am in a position to speak, since most of the time I was with them I passed in the "Retreat," which was what Netta and her mother called it.

It was a sort of barn, or rather the remnants of what had been a barn; I fancy that once it had been a building of considerable size. Some of the original beams were standing still, great balks of timber some of them were. Apparently at one time it had been used to store all sorts of farmers' stores. It was a good size, much larger than the living-room, perhaps fifteen or sixteen feet long and eight or ten broad. Light came through a number of cracks on one side and an opening at one end. The floor was the bare earth. On one side lay bundles of litter covered with sacking.

"There," said Netta, "are your beds, your couches, your chairs, the furniture of your apartment."

As she had said, it was not luxurious, but the trenches had introduced me to much less agreeable quarters.

"Let me recommend you," she told me, "not to choose this end bed. Underneath is our chief stock room, with most of our stores. I will show you."

She did, drawing aside the litter which formed a couch, disclosing the fact that it rested on some boards which concealed what seemed to be a pit in the ground, a good large pit, filled with all sorts of things. She explained what they were.

"As you perhaps know, in this country there is no food. They will not only rob us of all we have, they will feed themselves at our expense. But that is impossible, because there is no food for them to eat; there is not so much as a sack of corn. If it were not for you English, and for the Americans, who must have hearts in their bosoms, all the Belgians left in Belgium would starve in a week. The Germans would murder us a hundred times over. We have to depend upon foreigners for our daily bread. For my mother, and for me—before you is our larder, before you are our bags of flour, our potatoes, our vegetables, our salt, our bacon. Only let the Germans get scent of what we are hiding there, we shall starve in a week. Those German pigs, they go about trying to rob us of the little we have left for food. Two unprotected women—those brave Germans, they would think nothing of killing us for half a bag of flour, even for a dozen potatoes. They themselves are badly fed. Their Kaiser, he stuffs himself, so they tell me; but the cowards who do his murdering, he gives them as little to eat as he can."

One thing she said stuck in my ears.

"You talk about unprotected women. To me you don't look as if you were exactly unprotected."

On the top of a lot of potatoes, carrots, turnips, onions, a number of arms were lying—revolvers, rifles, swords, I knew not what. She smiled. Just as she was about to speak her mother held up her hand with a warning gesture. Leaning towards me, Netta spoke in a whisper.

"Make no noise. I will show you something."

Stooping forward, she took two rifles from the top of the heap of vegetables; one she gave to her mother. She pointed to the cracks in the walls.

"Those are our windows; we can see anything that may be passing outside. They cannot see us. Half a moment's patience and you will see."

They placed me in a position in which, by dint of peering through a break in the wall, I saw everything that was taking place without, through openings in the foliage of the bushes and shrubs which hid the fact that there was anything suspicious upon that side. Presently, along the open ground beyond, men began to appear, German soldiers, mounting upwards towards the top of the hill.

"What are they wearing on their faces?" I inquired.

"Those are what they call respirators. They are to enable them to breathe in the suffocating gas which is the new way they have of fighting. I will get some perhaps to-day. From the Germans you can get whatever they have, if you only know how to set about it. For the matter of that, my

"'IF THEY KNEW, THOSE GENTLEMEN,' SAID NETTA, 'HOW OFTEN THEY PASS ACROSS THE LINE OF DEATH. WE CAN SHOOT, MY MOTHER AND I.'"

mother and I can kill six or seven of them as they go. They will never know what has hit them. Only, of course, it is a little dangerous; their comrades might take it into their heads to hunt us out. There will be a short shrift for us if they find us."

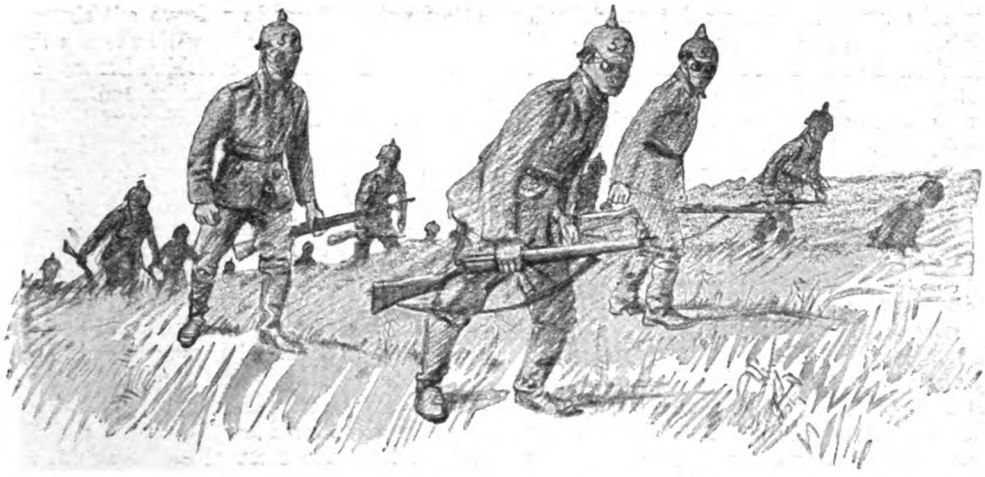
The two women thrust the muzzles of their guns through the cracks, pointing them at the passing soldiers. I induced them not to fire.

"If they knew, those gentlemen," said Netta, "how often they pass across the line of death. We can shoot, my mother and I. I promise we should not often miss. Sometimes they pass a dozen times a day, sometimes even every hour. But we wish to run no risk. Such creatures bring out the worst that is in a man or woman. We do not kill even a German unless we are pretty nearly sure to avoid discovery. There is a piece of ground on the other side which we call the 'Graveyard.' One day we are going to send a note to the officer in command to suggest that they should dig it up. They would find it full, just a little way under the surface, of dead men, who, no doubt, they have reported to their emperor, that king of murderers, as missing. It is they who have taught us that to murder is nothing. Presently, now that they have introduced their poisonous gas, they will learn that it is less than nothing. They will discover, also, what they will not find so amusing—that it is a game which two can play at."

My feet grew rapidly better. On the third day I could walk about. Netta and her mother gathered information from I knew not where. From them I learnt that the battle was still raging, that in spite of all their efforts the Germans had not driven us from our trenches, that the storm of shells still rained down on us, gas bombs and all. But it seemed that we had learnt some trick to get the better of the worst of the suffocating gas.

"It seems," explained Netta, "that they have not enough of it. If they could only get enough of it they would soon drive your people out of the trenches, or kill them if they persisted in staying in."

My position was a strange one. All day and night I longed to join my company, to fight with the others. Again and again, thinking I was better, I started off to do it—to find out, before I had gone very far, that it was impossible. I was glad enough to return to



the Retreat, not much worse than I started. Netta and her mother were very patient. Were it not for their assistance more than once I should have come to a bad end. Not only were German soldiers often passing; there were English soldiers, too. Once, in the early morning, four men of my own company came stealing past. I almost tried to attract their attention by calling out to them, but, after all, I considered, what was there to gain? The rain of shells had just commenced for the day. They were perhaps on a special errand, the success of which might be imperilled by delay. There would be nothing gained by my calling their attention to the fact that I was there.

It was the morning of the sixth day. I was finishing my breakfast, when Netta came hurrying in. She had been on one of those mysterious missions on which she seemed to go each morning. She was nearly all mystery to me. I was eating my breakfast in the Retreat.

"How are your feet this morning?" asked Netta.

"Right as rain," I told her; "good for a ten-mile walk. I am going to report myself to-day. They will have reported me as missing. A nice state they will be in at home."

"You can put that right in five minutes when you get near a telegraph, or even a telephone. I want you to do something before you report yourself." She looked at me in a way which I knew showed that her words had a special meaning of their own. Leaning over towards me, she lowered her voice as she asked me a question. "You say you can walk ten miles. Can you get half-way up the hill and back again? I will give you a hand, but I would rather you did without my mother if you can manage it. I am starting on an adventure which I would rather she were kept out of if we can do without her."

The idea nettled me; I was ready to give her my word that I was good to go a dozen times up and down the hill, without the slightest help from anyone. But when it came to the scratch I found that I was not so clever on my pins as I had supposed. She led me by a by-path which kept under cover of the trees nearly the whole of the way. It might have been a little more difficult than if we had kept to the open, and a little longer, but certainly that was not the reason why I had to stop every fifty yards or so and take a rest on anything handy. I was reluctantly coming to the conclusion that I should have to give up the effort to get up farther when she announced that we had gained our journey's end.

"You can stretch yourself on the moss at the foot of this tree and rest as long as you please. No one passing need see you unless you choose if they are not on a special look-out for you. I am going to show you something which is of particular interest to the Germans, but the existence of which is, I daresay, not known to fifty men. You are the first Englishman to whom it has ever been introduced. Just look about you. Is there anything in sight to cause you to suspect that you are within reach of the most dangerous spot in Flanders?"

I did as she suggested—looked about me. I could see nothing in any way unusual. At one point the ground showed signs of unevenness, amid a clump of young saplings, but there was nothing anywhere to attract attention from a casual passer-by. I told her so. She smiled.

"THERE ARE THE CYLINDERS. THEY ARE FULL OF GAS—POISON GAS."

"Those Germans," she said, "are in some ways the cleverest devils that ever were. You remember that battery you Englishmen blew up?" I remembered it very well; I had reason to. "That was farther up. If you mount a trifle higher on to that little slope you can see the place where it was. Its destruction was one of the greatest blows they have had. It was meant to be used in more ways than one, and to place the whole country at their mercy. When it was destroyed they only had one consolation—something which was almost as important as the battery itself was left untouched. I am going to show you. I came on it by accident. It is a way I have, when I see German soldiers, to follow them. One morning, some days ago, I followed a dozen of them to some purpose. Two of them came here, the others spread themselves about on guard." Approaching the clump of saplings, she walked right into their midst. "With their entrenching tools they moved a little heap of broken branches, and scraped the ground quite clear. Apparently some sort of handle was exposed in the earth at their feet. One of them, taking hold of it, gave it a short, sharp pull to one side; some sort of door came away, bringing with it a considerable portion of earth. It reminded me of the pit in which we keep the stores in our Retreat. Something of the kind had been exposed by what the man had done. He lowered himself into a hole four or five feet deep. Evidently that gave him access to a door which he quite easily opened, and through which he vanished. After a second or two the other man followed; the others stayed at their posts outside. I had no idea where they had gone, or what they were doing, but it was a good hour before they reappeared. Not five minutes after their return the whole twelve marched away, leaving things exactly as they were when they arrived, so that no one would have guessed that a soul had been near the place."

Kneeling down, she began to take something from among the long trailing weeds which covered the ground in front of her. Presently she held up something in her hand.

"I have an entrenching tool of my own. I felt that I could not bring one up every time I wanted to pay a visit to what is down there. Are you sufficiently rested to come and see what it is?"

I was. Had my fatigue been greater I could have managed to do that. With deft hands she did as she had described, I leaning against a tree and watching while she did it. The ground was first of all laid bare; then an opening some six or eight feet square and five or six feet deep was exposed. Into this she sprang. What looked like a door of some sort of metal was in front of her.

"This door," she explained, "was a bit of a puzzle. I thought I was beaten; I fancy it is made of steel. You see there is a handle but no keyhole. The door itself is quite solid. You take hold of the handle; it refuses to budge. Now, I had watched the man who was the first to enter. I was lying down among the bracken just over there where I could see quite easily everything he did. I have uncommonly good eyes, as you have perhaps noticed." I had; I had observed that nothing, however trivial, seemed to escape her notice. "The other man stayed outside. The man in the hole stood facing the door like this." She gave me an object-lesson there and then. "He had the handle in both hands; most of his weight was on his left foot, which was a little behind. His right was well forward so that it touched the door at the bottom. All at once, with a sort of spring, he shifted his weight from the left foot to the right, at the same time giving a sideways jerk to the handle, just as you might do if you were trying to shoot the bolt of a door—like this."

Even as she spoke she suited her actions to her words. The door was open.

"As I expected," she continued, "the door was worked by a spring bolt, and by the greatest luck in the world I had hit upon the trick by which the thing was done. You see, it is easy enough when you know how, but you would never find your way in unless you did, except by accident. You see how beautifully it is kept oiled? Not a sound when you open or shut it. There is a very curious place inside here when the door is open. Come and see it."

I did; my descent was not so easily managed as hers. Within was what seemed to me to be a sort of cellar. Whether there had been a kind of cavern there in the first place, or whether it entirely owed its presence to man, I could not say; man had made it what it was. The floor and the ceiling were of brick; the place seemed as dry as a bone.

"There seems to have been an idea," explained Netta, as, stepping inside, she surveyed its contents, "that something might happen to the magazine in the battery, so that they provided this place where all the necessary stores might be replenished—they are thoughtful brutes, those Germans! There is pretty nearly every kind of shell

kept in stock down here. But there is something else as well as shells. You see these?" She tapped something with the toe of her boot. "These are cylinders. It almost looks as if they had prophetic eyes. They are full of gas—poison gas. There is enough gas here to poison all the country-side. They make it on the premises also down below."

"What is down below?" I asked.

"You people do not seem to know it, but there is a German camp. You go straight down—it is not far—and at the bottom you turn to the left, and there you are. It is within half a mile of the farm, but I believe they know no more of us than you do of them, although they have been there ever since I came home. They have been up to something lately, because the number in the camp has increased. One thing I can tell you they have been planning—to poison all the country-side. You see these cylinders? There must be a thousand at least. Lately they have been bringing them up almost daily. You see this thing? I suppose it is a sort of reservoir; it is full of gas—goodness knows how much it holds! The ground is piped. By turning on taps the gas can be sent in all directions, almost up to the first trench which you English are occupying up at the top. You see this sort of switchboard with signs upon it, and the little taps—I do not know how they are worked, but they do. One of them can come, and I believe that by turning certain of these little things can suffocate you without your having any idea of what is happening."

While I listened, thinking what nice chaps she made them out to be, she suddenly stopped and held up a warning hand.

"Be still!" she whispered. "Here he is." I could hear the sound of approaching footsteps, but who the new-comer was, and to whom she alluded, I had not a notion. Going out into the open air she waited for some seconds in silence to allow the approaching footsteps to come closer. Presently she exclaimed, speaking to the owner of the footsteps: "So, it is you! You are in good time." Then she spoke to me. "I think, Mr. Briggs, you will find that this is a friend of yours."

Coming out to learn who the new-comer was, I was accosted by a voice which I certainly did not expect to hear.

"Why, Sam, old man, you are a surprise-packet! You're about the last person in this world I expected to meet. What is the meaning of this little game? This young lady has ways of her own; at keeping things dark she is a marvel. Why, I only wrote to your sister the day before yesterday to tell her you were missing."

"Naturally," I told him, "that is just the sort of thing you would do. I wonder you did not write and tell my old mother that I had been blown to pieces first and poisoned afterwards."

Bob Sparrow—it was Bob Sparrow, looking rather longer and thinner than ever—stared as if he were rather under the impression that he was suffering from a grievance.

"You are a nice sort of chap! Your sister kept wondering why it was no one heard. What was I to tell her?"

"I have been away from the camp six days; my feet have been so bad that I've been unable to move on them. Miss Swerts and her mother have been so good as to give me the hospitality of their house. There was not the slightest necessity for you to tell my sister anything—I am not in the habit of writing to her every day. Confound you and my sister, too! By the way, I notice you have got three stripes on your arm; things have been moving with you pretty quickly."

"They have. Our chaps have been thinned out fast. We've been doing some fighting, I can tell you! This looks as if it were going to be a day off. I have gone up three steps inside a week. Now, Sergeant Briggs, I'm Sergeant Sparrow. I shouldn't wonder, when they find out you're still in the land of the living, if they gave you a commission."

His saying such things made me open my eyes.

"What nonsense are you talking? Give me a commission! They have got more sense. Look here, Bob Sparrow, how did you come to make Miss Swerts's acquaintance?"

Netta thrust in her oar. I could see that my question put Bob rather in a mix.

"He didn't make my acquaintance; I made his. When I found that he knew you I thought of a way in which it seemed that you might be of use to each other. I found out that the Germans have got everything ready; at any time, at a moment's notice, they can turn on their accursed gas and destroy all you English for I do not know how far. They will reconquer this hill—you know it was theirs before you took it from them. If it is theirs again you will not get it back so easily. I ask for your advice as

to the best to be done to prevent their carrying out their little scheme. It is a matter in which you are better able to judge than I am."

I was not so sure of that. I was not aware that Bob Sparrow was much of a strategist—I was sure I wasn't. In the circumstances I was quite prepared to admit that this was a matter in which her head was worth our two. I was not, however, prepared to go quite so far as to tell her so—but one suggestion I did make.

"Don't you think," I asked her, "the best thing we could do is to tell the whole thing to the Colonel and take our orders from him?"

She looked as if she were a little doubtful.

"There is only one thing," she said; "sometimes your British officers are a little slow. By the time they would do anything it might already be too late." Checking herself in what seemed to be the middle of a sentence, again she held up a warning hand. "Perhaps it is late already. There are some Germans coming up the hill."

That someone was coming was plain. There was the tread of heavy feet, which suggested the clumsy tramp of the German soldier. Quite what happened I do not know. Netta sprang out of the pit as lightly as any boy. In trying to follow her my feet gave way beneath me. I stumbled and fell. Trying to recover myself, my ankles simply refused to hold me up. Snatching at the door as I came down backwards, I dragged it with me, so quickly that before I realized what was happening I had gone tumbling to the ground, and the door, moving on its too well oiled hinges, had shut without a sound. I was left, I knew not in what position, in pitch darkness.

I had come down with such suddenness on to a heap of what I took to be shells, which seemed to scatter in all directions, that it was some seconds before I had even a glimmer of what had happened. Anything like the darkness which surrounded me I never knew. I had lost all sense of direction; whereabouts the door was I had no idea. Every movement I made seemed to cause havoc to something. To crown all, I did not seem to have a match in my pocket. There had been no smoking for me at the farm lest the smell should have reached a passer-by and roused curiosity as to the cause of it. A pretty pickle I was in. I believe all would have been up with me had not Netta kept her wits. Before I realized how desperate my position really was, I became conscious that someone was trying the door from without. Suddenly something happened to it; it opened, there was a burst of light. Netta was standing in the open doorway, with the handle in her hand.

"Mr. Briggs," came her voice, "are you hurt? Where are you?"

"That is what I can hardly tell you," I replied. "I am somewhere on the ground amid a lot of something. I don't feel as if I could get up."

"That's a pity, because here are a lot of those German brutes, who will make short work of us if they find us here. Mr. Sparrow, come and help Mr. Briggs."

Sparrow's voice came from without.

"I'm afraid there isn't much time. What is wanted most is a gun."

"A gun? There are guns enough in here." Going into the cellar—or whatever it was called—she turned to where a number of rifles were in a rack fastened to the wall. She handed one to Sparrow, whose figure in the open doorway threw the whole place into shadow. "You will find that it is loaded." She turned to me. "Give me a hand." I gave her one. With a sudden twist she not only hauled me to my feet, but practically lifted me into the open air. "Lend a hand, Mr. Sparrow. Let us get Mr. Briggs among those tall grasses. If you are quick, there still may be time."

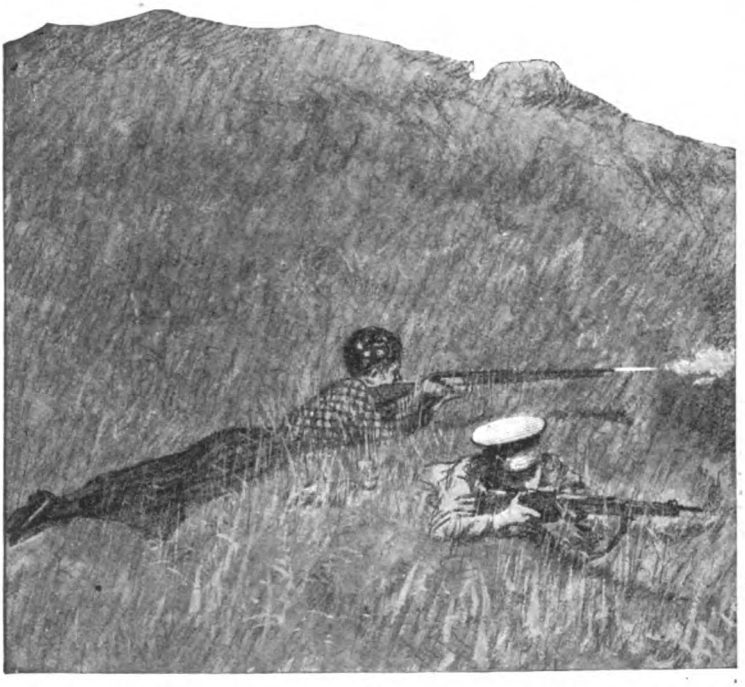
How they did it I don't know. Presently I was peeping out from among a tangled growth of greenery, towards where heavy steps ascended the hill, growing momentarily closer. Netta gave Sparrow no time for consideration.

"Quick, Mr. Sparrow, quick! We may still conceal from those Germans that we have so recently been here. Don't stand still and dream, but help!"

Urged by her, Bob Sparrow obeyed, without, I fancy, quite realizing what he did. The door was shut, the entrance to the pit covered, the leaves, twigs, and brushwood, which had concealed the fact that there was anything unusual there, restored as nearly as possible to the position in which they recently were. The whole performance occupied a surprisingly short space of time. Presently Netta was lying full length amid the tall weeds and grasses on my right. Sparrow, directed by her, was under cover of a clump of bushes right in front, the entrance to the cellar between us. She brought a rifle for me and one for herself, then issued her instructions.

"Do nothing; do not move. Do not make a sound until I fire, then let them have it for all you're worth. If we manage properly, we might induce them to take to their heels.

Taken by surprise, we might trick them into supposing we three are three hundred. I have known it done. I do not fancy there are very many of them."



There weren't, luckily for us. They came into sight just as Sparrow had taken cover. So far as I could make out, there were fourteen. Four of them, in charge of an officer, came right forward, the remaining ten spread themselves out as if with a view to guarding all the approaches and preventing their being taken by surprise. The position had a very odd effect on me. It seemed that, if they used their eyes, they could hardly help seeing us. They were all round us. Every moment I expected Netta to fire. But all she did when I glanced her way was to give her head a slight shake and lie still.

The whole business might have ended in nothing had it not been for the stumble which had landed me backwards on top of that heap of shells. The entrance to the cellar was exposed again; the door was opened. The moment the man who opened it entered a hubbub arose. The conversation took place in German, which Netta interpreted in a whisper.

"They have discovered that someone has been making free with their hiding-place, that it has had a recent visitor. Keep your rifle ready; there is going to be trouble."

She was right; there was. The German officer in charge carried on what seemed to be a warm discussion with his three companions, in tones which were perfectly audible, as Netta made clear by acting as interpreter.

"They are not ordinary soldiers; they are chemists, those men. They have come up here to put the finishing touches to the mischief which is brewing there. That man with the black moustache is the leader; he is in charge. He is going to telephone to someone. Somewhere they have been making gas; they are going to turn it on and choke you English out. Discovering our visit has given them the alarm. He is going to do something which he takes it for granted will mean destruction to you. If something is not done—quickly—it will be too late. What shall we do? See, he is feeling for a tap, or something, which will set the diabolical stuff in motion. We can, at any rate, stop him."

The man came for a moment to the door which gave access to the deadly store-house. He had a paper in his hand which he was studying. Apparently the contents of the paper were not easy to decipher; he raised it to his face, studying it closely; lowered it; and spoke to the man I presumed was his superior officer, as if asking for instructions. He was not so audible, but it seemed that Netta could still hear.

"He says," she whispered, "that in about a quarter of an hour he might be able to do for the whole lot of you. He wants to know if he shall let you have it. The officer says yes, so in a quarter of an hour he hopes that you will all be dead. We shall see. He will be the first to go—afterwards his officer! You find targets amid those fellows in front. I hope that Mr. Sparrow will find his, behind. Fire!"

Her action came in the same breath as her word of command; she had the barrel of her weapon trained upon the man she had

been interpreting. He stepped back, presumably with the intention of carrying out his diabolical plan. As he was in the act of turning, his face was full towards us. Netta's rifle cracked; the fellow fell where he stood. The officer close to his side looked to see whence the shot had come; I was otherwise engaged. I doubt if there were half-a-dozen seconds between her shot and mine. I aimed at a tall chap whom I had an uncomfortable feeling was staring straight over at us. If he was, he had no chance of proclaiming that we were discovered. I don't think that in this world he ever spoke

"HE TOPPLED ON TO THE MOTIONLESS FIGURE AT HIS FEET."

the rifle cracked again; he toppled on to the motionless figure at his feet. These things I saw as if in spite of myself—actually again. About ten or twelve feet from him a colleague was taking the greatest interest in what was happening at the entrance to

the cellar, leaning on his rifle as he bent forward. At my second shot he went crashing forward on to his face, as if the support of his weapon had failed him. Sparrow was equally fortunate. I did not see at whom he had aimed, but I was conscious that each of his shots had found the mark for which it was intended.

There was no mistaking the sensation we had made. In their surprise the remaining Germans seemed to have lost their senses. Leaping forward in startled wonder, clearly —their attitudes showed it—they had not a notion whence the shots had come. I always seem to notice that without instructions from his superior officer the German soldier has no initiative of his own. The familiar voice of his officer was still, not an order was issued; the confusion in his mind caused by this unnatural state of things was heightened by the continued silence. Before they had a chance to pull themselves together—those chaps were pretty slow-witted—we fired again.

I had marked a fellow who was glancing about as if he thought his assailants might be on all sides. He never learnt where they were; I touched the trigger, down he came —where he fell there he lay. As regards the others, both of their shots had again gone home. Netta's forecast was proved almost ludicrously correct. One of the Germans had fired; I am not sure that a second didn't. I am sure that he fired blindly into space. Then the fellow farthest from where I was threw away his rifle and started to run. I should not be surprised if he was under the impression that the last two shots, coming from his own friends, had been fired by fresh assailants, and that they were attacked—as Netta had prophesied—by an indefinite number of foes. I let him run, but both Netta and Sparrow tried flying shots. One of the shots was a hit; Sparrow made clear whose it was.

"My word!" he exclaimed, speaking as if it were now quite clear that all danger was past, "you brought the beggar down. You can aim! It's the first time I ever knew that a woman could fire a gun."

He received then and there further proof that she could. Rising to her feet she stood looking about her. Some little distance behind us was the prostrate figure of a man. Sparrow had brought him down, and from the attitude in which he lay, motionless as a log, one concluded that he had been killed on the spot; but I noticed, as Netta's glance passed on, that the hitherto motionless figure moved, that the gun, which had seemed to be gripped by nerveless fingers, was raised. I murmured a warning.

"Look out," I told her, "the fellow is going to fire."

He did, but she was as quick as he was. I take it that she was perhaps a shade the quicker, because that his shot went wide and that hers went home was shown by the fact that he never moved again.

The rest had done my feet good; unaided I crossed with Netta to the German storehouse. The open doorway was almost blocked by the two recumbent figures. Springing down, Netta took the crumpled paper from the hand of the man who lay beneath. As she was smoothing it out there came the sound of a low whistle. Sparrow, who had joined us, started. He held up his hand, commanding attention.

"Listen! They're here!" Obviously someone was there; someone, it seemed, who was signalling to him; someone not very far from us, who was whistling the first bars of "Tipperary." I inquired who the whistler was. His reply was a trifle vague. "It's the regiment. I arranged with Mr. Chandler that I was to meet this young lady here, and that if I didn't turn up at a certain time he was to come and bring some of the chaps to find out the reason. Look out, I'm going to give him a call."

He did, whistling another bar of "Tipperary." Presently English soldiers began to appear among the trees on the ground above. The main body was halted; three or four figures came forward, among them Mr. Durrant. At sight of me he appeared to be surprised.

"Briggs, is that you? Glad to see you. Where have you been hiding?"

I explained—as well as I could—in half-a-dozen sentences. Netta had her say.

"They will be back presently, those Germans. As there was no pursuit they will conclude that they have been tricked, that there is something wrong. Is either of you gentlemen a chemist?"

Sparrow explained.

"Mr. Chandler is a chemist." He addressed a lieutenant who was a stranger to me, a man who was somewhere in the thirties, with a short moustache turned up at the ends and keen black eyes. "This, Mr. Chandler, is the young lady of whom I told you. It seems that we got here at a lucky moment, that they were just going to try to poison us all."

Netta held out the paper which she had taken from the dead man's hand.

"This seems to be a sort of plan of what

the Germans were doing. If you will come down here, sir, I think I shall be able to give you a sort of hint of what it means. You speak German ?"

Apparently Mr. Chandler spoke German like a native. Going down to Netta's side, holding the paper in his turn, he followed her explanations rapidly enough, it seemed, even for her. Drawing Mr. Durrant to one side, the pair held a hurried consultation. Then Durrant questioned me.

"Briggs, do you know anything about this young woman ? Is she to be trusted ?"

I told him that she was to be trusted absolutely. Then Mr. Chandler spoke.

"According to this"—he referred to the sheet of paper—"we've hit on a find. We've been wondering where they got their supplies of gas with which the whole country-side has been devastated, and which seemed to be getting worse and worse each day. According to this young woman, she has hit on the place of manufacture. They have laid pipes underground over miles and miles of country, leading in all directions, and all of them regulated by a series of taps. I don't quite understand her story, but according to her we've only just been saved from a horrible catastrophe by a stroke of good fortune."

"And, if you'll excuse my saying so, by her presence of mind—and something more. She's one of the finest shots with the rifle I ever saw. I think you may safely count on the correctness of whatever she may say."

Again there was a brief consultation between the two officers. Then Mr. Chandler joined forces with Netta. The pair of them entered the cellar, Mr. Chandler listening with all his ears to what Netta had to say. Then he called out to us.

"Mr. Durrant, would you mind stepping in here ? I would like to have you as a witness to what this young lady has to say. The responsibility is rather more than I care to undertake alone. Briggs, if your feet will bear you, you might come here also."

My feet were good enough for a job like that. Mr. Chandler made it clear that he understood all that Netta had said—more, all that she had hinted at.

"The gas, which is something novel in gases, is being manufactured somewhere below ; here it is being stored. These taps act on the various pipes which carry it off. This is the master tap, acting on all of them together. It can be manipulated to send the gas in all directions at once. I think it probable that it can be made to descend so that it will affect the men who are making it in the camp below. If that is the case, the would-be destroyers can be made to destroy themselves. Do you think that I should try ?"

"You simply have to turn a tap ?"

As Mr. Durrant put this question Mr. Chandler was bending over what looked to be a network of shining slender metal pipes.

"Practically that's all; but you understand that I have not any very definite data to go on. This young lady doesn't claim to have any either. The results may not be what I expect."

Netta interposed.

"There is always a risk ; in affairs of this sort you cannot often have a certainty. But then, for some time I have been watching what they were doing. The chances are in our favour. You may take it that what it says upon that plan is correct. By following what it says you will not go very far wrong."

Mr. Chandler referred the point to Mr. Durrant.

"You hear. Shall I take the chance ? It may not be one that will quickly occur again."

"At any moment also," Netta declared, "the Germans may return. All the time I am afraid they will return. Then the chance will be theirs. Not a second time will they let it slip from their fingers."

"Chandler," said Mr. Durrant, "we won't let the first chance slip. Let them have all the gas they want."

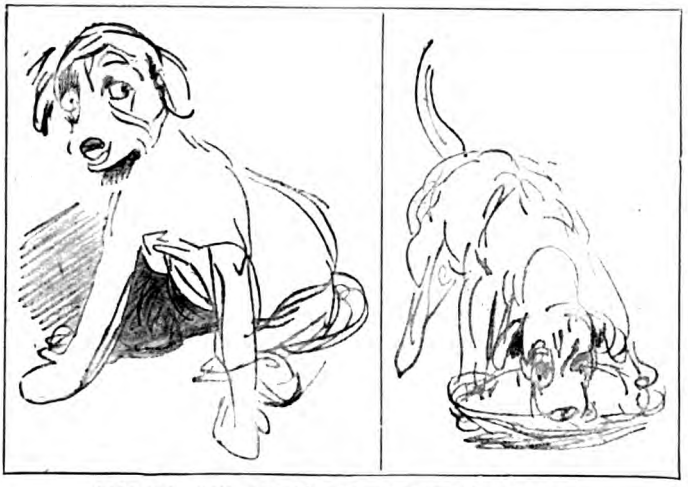
"Good," agreed Mr. Chandler. "I think you're right. To let the beggars poison themselves would be the sort of reprisal which would appeal to the German sense of humour. Take care, I don't know what the immediate consequences will be. It is a game we're playing in the dark. But when we have started things going, the atmosphere in here, even with the door open, suggests that we should lose no time in making for the open air, shutting the door, and leaving them to enjoy their own gas. Are you ready ? Then out you go."

And out we went. Quite what Mr. Chandler did I can't pretend to say, but he did something with a little brass tap which he singled out from among the others. A pungent odour became instantly obvious. We made what haste we could to where the air seemed to have an opportunity of keeping pure. Being on the right side of it, Mr. Chandler allowed the heavy door to move on its well-oiled hinges. Then we stood motionless, as if expecting some dreadful convulsion of Nature to follow the closing of the door.

[*Read the conclusion of this exciting adventure in the next number.*]

Some Scraps of Paper.

By WALTER EMANUEL.



TWO OF CECIL ALDIN'S INIMITABLE DOG STUDIES.

I WAS looking through, the other day, a little collection of scraps of paper — odds and ends from artist friends — to which I have added from time to time, and I felt glad that I had preserved them. Some of them, it occurs to me, may be of interest to the readers of this magazine.

ANOTHER DOG SKETCH, by Haldane Macfall.

For example, above are two of the original rough sketches for the inimitable series with which Cecil Aldin illustrated my "A Dog Day" — red hot from the artist's brain, so to say. There are to-day many artists in the Comic Dog line, but Aldin is *facile princeps*. I do not think I have ever seen so much nervous, wolfish greediness as Aldin has expressed in the sketch illustrating the line in the diary, "Ate Dinner." One feels that there is some danger of the plate as well as its contents disappearing.

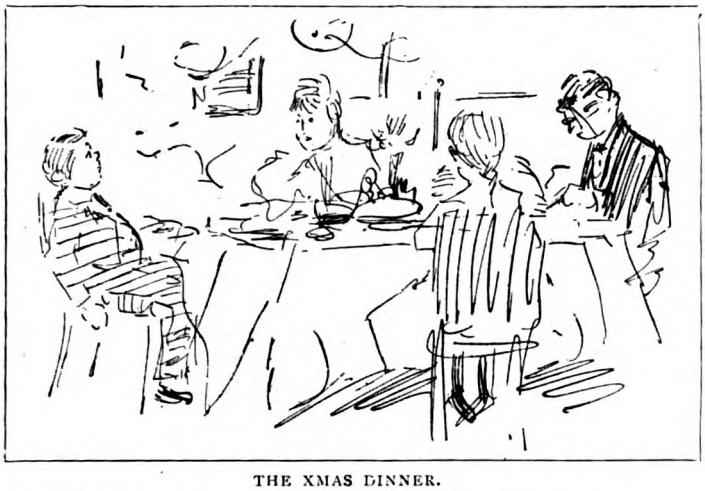
And here's another dog drawn by Captain Haldane Macfall—master of all the arts.

And here's a happy, irresponsible little sketch by Phil May—John Toole, is it, in monk's robes?—jotted down on the back of a more important drawing.

And here's a brilliant rough sketch by Raven-Hill for a *Punch* drawing, illustrating a jest I had sent him.

The invitation from E. T. Reed, of

A HAPPY LITTLE SKETCH OF TOOLE, by Phil May.



THE XMAS DINNER.

TOMMY (who has passed the Plimsoll mark): "Ma!"
Mother: "Yes, dear?"
Tommy: "May I go and put on my jersey instead of this beastly coat an' waistcoat?"

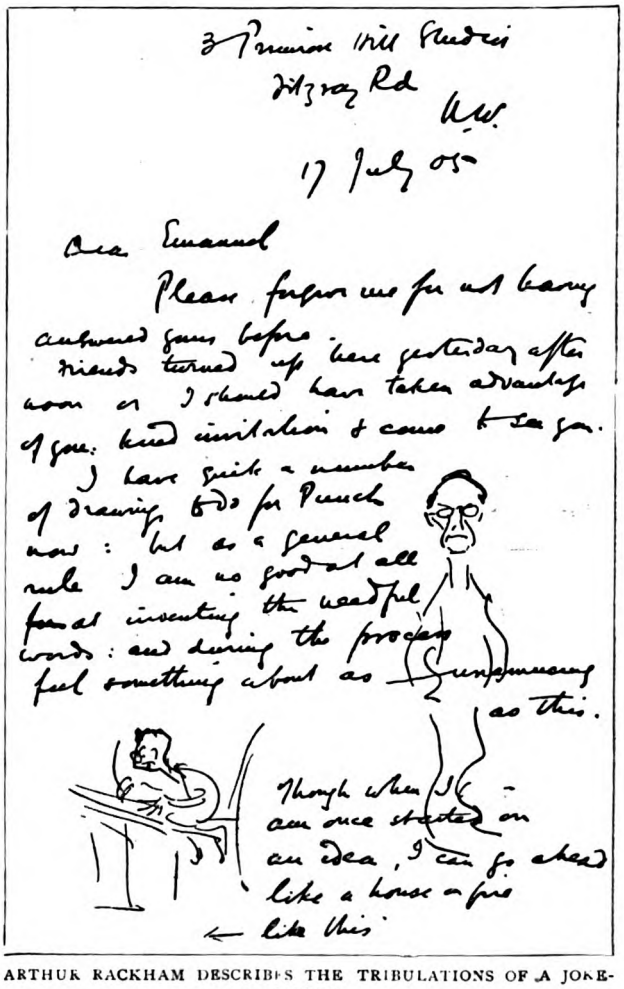
RAVEN-HILL'S ROUGH SKETCH FOR A "PUNCH" DRAWING.

"Prehistoric Peeps" fame, which is also reproduced, will not, I trust, lead to trouble between him and his cook.

Next, an extract from a letter from Arthur Rackham describing his tribulations as a joke-maker. The "full-length" is an astonishingly vivid caricature of himself.

I have a good few caricatures of myself—myabsurd, scarified eyebrows proving, no doubt, an irresistible attraction to the caricaturist. I give two. The one was drawn, when I was a bearded pard, by René Bull (the historian will be able to date it by the fact that it was done at the height of the Great Ping-Pong Boom). The other is by Sir F. C. Gould's clever son, A. C. Gould, sketched after my beard had disappeared in accordance with one of the provisions of a certain marriage treaty.

AN INVITATION FROM E. T. REED.



ARTHUR RACKHAM DESCRIBES THE TRIBULATIONS OF A JOKE-MAKER.

THE AUTHOR—AS SEEN BY RENÉ BULL.

A. C. GOULD'S IDEA OF THE AUTHOR.

And we also have a life-like portrait, on a post-card, from Starr Wood — a humorous artist who is nearly always funny.

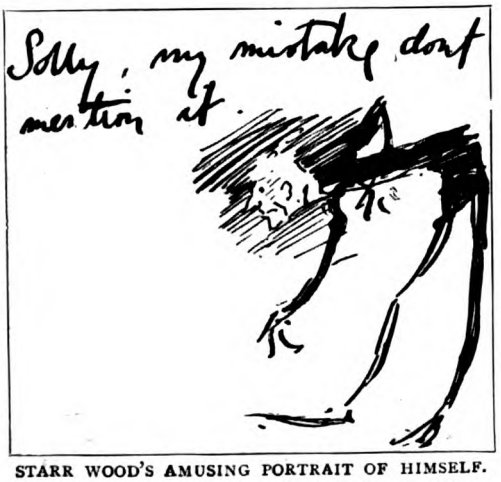
Next two little "notes" by Steven Spurrier, better known for his serious work in illustration. He and I are special constables in the same squad. To while away the dreary four hours during which nothing ever happens, he and I, at times, talk Cockney together, and, to make conversation, I have a fictitious son, "Little 'Orace—'ead scholard at Saffery Line Cahnty Cahncil School—a bloomin' little geniass, 'oo used to be a good-lookin' little feller till the doctor made 'im wear glawsses and ruined 'is aperients." Here we have him as imagined by Spurrier. The other drawing is an actuality. It represents "Old Bill," a picturesque character who, during the winter, replenished the fires in our braziers at the works that we guard. "Old Bill," I would mention, had a very original view as to the cause of the war. According to him it was all "Old Queen Victoria's fault." She made too much fuss of the Kaiser when he was a boy "and fair turned 'is 'ead, and that's why 'e's so saucy to us now."

"LITTLE 'ORACE,"
by Stephen Spurrier.

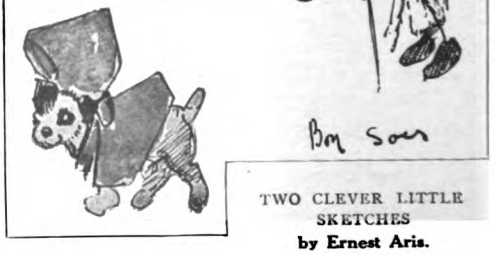
"OLD BILL,"
by Stephen Spurrier.

Finally a couple of happy little pen-scratches, from letters, by Ernest Aris, one of the younger of our "comic zoologists."

Moral, to Kaisers and others: Don't tear up scraps of paper. One day you may be able to make quite an interesting little article out of them.



STARR WOOD'S AMUSING PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF.



TWO CLEVER LITTLE SKETCHES
by Ernest Aris.

INCIDENTS IN PHOTOGRAPHY

BY

BARRY PAIN

Illustrated by Alfred Leete.

I.

IT happened in the time of the Great War that Mr. Mortimer Ludlow became dissatisfied with the state of things as they were. Ludlow was quite a clever character-actor, and at the age of forty-three, when he had been on the stage twenty years, a writer discovered him and assured those of us whom it might concern that we should hear more of Mr. Ludlow. None the less, for three months he had not had a paying engagement.

He had accepted several engagements which were not remunerative. He had taken part in various charity entertainments with the generosity and want of mature consideration which are alike characteristic of his profession.

He had indeed causes for dissatisfaction amounting to bitterness of spirits. The opinion of the world seemed to be that Mortimer Ludlow was to help everybody else and that nobody was to help Mortimer Ludlow. He had been compelled to move into worse and cheaper rooms. He had spent what little money he had saved, had incurred a few debts, and was meditating upon the sale for cash of some portions of his extensive wardrobe. Even his efforts in the cause of charity had not brought him that serene happiness which is supposed to be associated with the performance of a good action. At some of these entertainments he had been practically compelled to witness—and to applaud—the ghastly work of dislocated amateurs. And he had just read in his morning paper the police-warning that one of these charities (to which he had given two days' work and expenses amounting to fourteen shillings) was an unholy fraud. It was very depressing. With a sigh he selected the goodly scarf-pin which was to be sacrificed, and went out.

The transaction was soon completed. The glad consciousness that he now had three ten-shilling notes in his pocket far outweighed the fact that he no longer had the seven-guinea scarf-pin. He could face the world for another day or two.

He was just facing the world, bravely and brightly—the hat is worn rather on the back of the head for this act—when a somewhat florid gentleman overtook him, clapped him on the shoulder, and exclaimed:—

"Mortimer, my dear boy! You're the very man I was looking for."

Now, although the florid gentleman was a theatrical agent, Ludlow did not believe his every word. Guided by experience, he was accustomed to hear his statements and then to try to deduce the facts from them.

He deduced correctly in this instance that the agent had not been looking for him, but had happened to see him and had thought of the possibility of business.

The agent, it appeared, had the chance of an engagement to offer. No, it was not a theatre or a music-hall. And it was not the cinematograph. It would probably mean regular work for some months. As for the salary—well, the money would be all right. The best thing would be for Ludlow to see Mr. Osman himself at the office at twelve.

At this point Ludlow made a customary

proposition, the agent made the usual reply that it was clean against all his rules to take anything in the morning, and the stereotyped result followed.

In the Bodega, under the mellowing influence of sherry, the agent became almost frank. He admitted that he had never seen Mr. Osman until the day before, and had not the faintest notion what Mr. Osman's business was. But Mr. Osman had demanded a good all-round actor, with initiative and imagination, who had done some producing.

"And—the money is really all right?" asked Ludlow.

"All I can tell you is that he came to my office in his own car. Not hired. I know the difference. But if we come along now you can see for yourself."

Ludlow went along accordingly. Mr. Osman was absolutely punctual, and two other actors to whom the agent had given the appointment were late. Ludlow got his interview at once. Mr. Osman was an educated American, and his accent was not very marked. He was a young man, with a thin, clean-shaven face and a highly intelligent eye. He went carefully into Ludlow's record and seemed satisfied.

"And now," he said, "I suppose you want to know about the work?"

Ludlow assented.

"Well, I'm going to be perfectly candid with you. I came to Europe just before the war, because I thought I saw an opening. The opening was there all right, but the war shut it. Since then I have had the idea that I might push a side-line of mine. Photography is not my business, but I've been very interested in it. I have a photographic studio of my own at home, and I have become an expert. I am starting here as 'Incidents Photography,' and what I want you to do is to pose for the camera in different characters yourself, and to think out suitable scenes, and to train supers to take part in them. You see, this war's a vurry terrible thing and vurry absorbing. The public wants any amount of pictures of it. I shall be able to dispose of my photographs of minor incidents of the war to the Press both here and in my own country."

"I don't think I quite see. Will you want me to go abroad?"

"No, sir. The little place I've taken is in the neighbourhood of Neasden, and that is where the incidents will be photographed."

"I see," said Ludlow, rather blankly. "The incidents are to be faked?"

"Mr. Ludlow," said Osman, impressively, "I have a vurry strong objection to that word. If there were anything dishonest in this business, I should not be utilizing my capital and brains and energy in it. No, sir! Here, for instance, is an incident of the kind I propose to deal with. The scene is the garden of one of your magnificent, and at the same time poetical, old baronial houses. In the background are clipped yews and something armorial in stone. In front is a British officer in uniform, a well-set-up young fellow, with a strong chin and a resolute expression. A beautiful young lady in a genu-ine Paris decollty evening dress is handing him goo-goo eyes and a sprig of rosemary. Now, that is an incident which must inevitably have happened, but you bet your life it was when the photographer was not there. Well, then, I reproduce that incident, employing the best talent and the strictest attention to details. I photograph the reproduced incident, put underneath it the line, 'This for Remembrance,' and sell it to fifty periodicals before I have time to turn. Nobody's hurt. The public simply eats it, and your recruiting is stimulated. And it will make a vurry beautiful picture."

"You might have had a horse in it," suggested Ludlow. "The officer could have one arm through the reins of his charger."

"Well, that's an idea," said Osman, reflectively, "though for the purposes of serious photography horses are bad. Here's another subject. Flat country, gleams of water and moonlight, large bird hovering; underneath, a dead German soldier lying on a low ridge. We could call it 'Cannon Fodder.'"

"We might, but we couldn't photograph it by moonlight."

"That is so. But that offers no difficulty to the expert, for he can make it look as if it were photographed by moonlight. A vurry pretty full-plate I could make of that. And the public would ask no questions. It is my experience that the public sometimes thinks and sometimes feels, but that it never does both things at the same time. And for that reason it will be the aim of 'Incidents Photography' to go straight to the heart. You've got to realize this. In moments of deep feeling or of considerable amusement the cerebral cortex does not operate."

The enterprising Mr. Osman had already produced a few samples of the kind of work which "Incidents Photography" would bring out. He had submitted these to a great number of periodicals, and had obtained prospective

and conditional orders. He showed these photographs to Ludlow, and Ludlow had to admit that as fakes they were very clever, while the actual photography was quite first-class. There was only one about which he had any criticism to offer.

"The face of the woman who is reading the letter from the Front is not at all good," he said. "It's wooden. It shows practically no emotion at all."

"You're quite right," said Osman, "but I am not showing that one. That happens to be absolutely genuine; in fact, it was the chance of taking a surreptitious snap-shot of it which gave me the whole idea. That's the trouble with real life; it never looks the least bit like it."

When Ludlow left the office he had accepted an engagement with "Incidents Photography." The salary offered was not large, but at the start he would be wanted for only five mornings in the week, and would still be able to accept afternoon or evening engagements. The honesty of the business seemed to him to be on the border-line, but he was too poor to be hypercritical.

In the Strand Ludlow encountered that charming comedian Herbert Basinghall, and had a few words with him.

"As a matter of fact," said Basinghall, airily, "I ought not to linger. I promised Waters to look in at his office at twelve. Osman, the well-known American manager, seems rather keen on getting me. It must be about twelve now."

"It's ten minutes to one. Did you say Osman?"

"I did. Why not, my dear boy, why not?"

Ludlow explained somewhat apologetically what had happened.

"I see," said Basinghall. "Waters promised that to me definitely and exclusively. I shall have a word with him."

"He may have forgotten. He does frequently forget."

"It's a matter of supreme indifference to me. Bogus war photography, I think you said. Dirty work, my boy, dirty work. Personally I wouldn't touch it with a barge-pole. If Osman had offered it to me he would have remembered this morning to his dying day. He would have learned that there were one or two things that even an American financier cannot buy. Besides, I couldn't have taken it in any case. Now I come to think of it I'm booked for Colly's new show, and it would have interfered with rehearsals. But that is as it may be. That's not what hurts me."

"No," said Ludlow, who was acquainted with Basinghall's rapid mentality and the amazing variety of his moods.

"No. The prizes of the profession are but few nowadays. I had counted on this, and you have wrested it from me—you whom I had trusted. Ah, Ludlow! But no doubt you are right, and it's not worth bothering about anyhow. Twopenny-halfpenny affair. Have a drink?"

They had it. Herbert Basinghall drank to the prosperity of "Incidents Photography." In his opinion it would bring the realities of war home to many people who were at present in a fool's paradise. As he had been compelled to refuse the work himself, he was only too glad that his friend Mortimer Ludlow would carry on the torch. But Ludlow was letting himself go too cheap, and must get the salary put right at once. After all, business was business.

II.

MORTIMER LUDLOW was interested in his new work, and found that it kept him busy. He was expected, as Osman frankly stated, to do as much as possible with as little as possible. Osman appeared to have money enough and to be willing to pay promptly for what was really necessary, but he permitted no expenditure that was not necessary. Salaries were few, and most of them were very low. The astute American also managed to get quite a good deal of unpaid work done for him. He explained his policy. In the case of a business that could be built up slowly it might be useful to make a loss now in order to make a larger profit in a year's time. But this was a different kind of business altogether. It was a question of rush and snatch, and nobody could say when the bottom would drop out of it. "So we've got to pay right away from the word jump—or as near as we can make it. I'm not meaning to be left with a loss."

Certainly nobody whom he employed worked quite as hard as Osman himself. With the help of one plain but highly efficient and intelligent woman, he ran the commercial side, including a considerable correspondence in three languages. He did nearly all the actual photography himself. He painted some almost convincing backgrounds. He was constantly thinking of some new idea, and each one went down in his pocket-book. He had time to see anybody who might possibly be useful, but had a very quick way with disappointments. He slept little and seemed to subsist principally

on cigarettes and tea. His energy was boundless, and such work as he produced had to be the very best that he could do. He would photograph the same scene again and again, until he was satisfied with the result; and if after that result had been obtained some possible improvement occurred or were suggested to him he would start afresh. "Incidents Photography" might not—in fact, did not—appeal to every periodical, but at any rate it always gave its customers strong photographs that would reproduce well.

It is not pretended that Osman's judgment was invariably correct. One morning when Ludlow arrived at the Neasden studio he found his employer in a state of suppressed enthusiasm.

"About half-past four this morning," said Osman, "an idea came to me like a knock on a door. It's a cinch. It's absolutely perfect. And it won't be expensive to do, for I shall use my own car and borrow the dog, and a background of park-railings and trees is easy."

"Well, what's the idea?" said Ludlow.

"The title of the picture," said Osman, speaking very slowly and impressively, "is 'Gallantry in the Park: Our National Hero Saves the Life of a Little Dog.' The motor-car is approaching at full speed along the road. Under the jaws of the car, so to speak, is the hero in the act of picking up the little dog. In the background we have a policeman rushing up, and on the side-walk the agonized lady who owns the dog. I've got that realized. I can see it. All you've got to do is to make up like Lord Kitchener in full uniform."

"If it's all the same to you," said Ludlow, dryly, "I'd sooner make up as the little dog. I should look more like it, and it would cause less trouble."

"You don't want to be nervous, you know," said Osman. "In the finished picture the car will appear to be going at full speed, but in the first photograph, which is where you come in, it will be actually standing still."

And then Ludlow proceeded to explain. He did not touch upon questions of taste or even of honesty. But in the course of a lengthy argument he did manage to persuade Osman that this was a picture that would not pay, and would most probably mean the absolute ruin of "Incidents Photography." Osman said, bitterly, that this did not seem to be a free country, but he relinquished the idea.

A far better idea of Osman's was the picture, which attained a good deal of popularity, entitled "Daddy Dons the Respirator." In this Ludlow had no objection to the part he was to take. He impersonated a middle- lass father, bald-headed and obese, making a surprise entrance into his own drawing-room, with the new respirator on. Two children are in paroxysms of terror, a parlour-maid drops her tray, and older members of the family give way to uncontrolled mirth. In pictures like this, where many characters were wanted, Osman relied

largely on amateur talent and let Ludlow knock it into shape. "It's a wonderful thing," said Osman, "but there are plenty of people who like dressing up, like being photographed, and like to see their faces in a newspaper. Very well, then—why should I pay people for doing what they like?" Nor did he. But he knew the uses of the small and complimentary gift. The paroxysmic children in "Daddy Dons the Respirator" got their box of chocolate. Pretty girls sometimes got as much as sixpennyworth of flowers for two mornings' work. And a really useful male volunteer would be told, genially, that he could not be allowed to go until he had had a drink. Osman never drank with him, but had seven different

excuses for this defection, and they were all good.

Regarded as a fake, "Aboard the Zeppelin" was quite clever. Nobody inquired by what means this photograph of a portion of the hostile airship in mid-air had been secured. No carping writer asked how the snapshot had been taken at night. Osman had found that effect of partial darkness helpful. The accuracy of details could not be disputed if the details could not be seen. In this photograph but two figures were visible. There was the man with the machine-gun. There was also the German skipper (Mortimer Ludlow), lean and alert, shading his eyes with one hand—presumably to avoid being dazzled by the moonlight. The rest was a tangle of ropes, a little canvas, and large black shadows.

"Yes," said Osman, "I don't know if it's at all right, and the betting's against it, but it looks absolutely right, and that's the only thing that matters. A vurry pleasing and impressive picture, I call that. Even you can't be spotted, Ludlow. The shadow over the face saves you."

"How do you mean?" said Ludlow.

"Well, for daylight photography you could never manage to look in the least like a German."

Now, so far, Ludlow had not included in his secret ambitions the slightest desire to look like a German. He may even, in his insular self-satisfaction, have been rather pleased that he did not look like a German. But Osman's innocent remark wounded Ludlow's professional pride. He understood the art of make-up thoroughly. In the last few weeks he had learned the difference between making up for the camera and making up for the footlights. His own face, clean-shaven, mobile, with no very pronounced features, was easy to disguise. He could make himself look like Falstaff or Hamlet or Juliet, or a hole in a wall. There was practically no limit. To be told that he could not become a convincing Bosch was almost an insult.

"Well, Osman," he said, "I've got an idea for a picture in which I represent a German. If you like the idea, we'll try it. And if I don't look like a German in it, I'll admit that I don't know my business."

Osman heard and approved of the idea, and a few days later a successful photograph was made. It was called "Arrested." A subtitle said it was "An incident of the spy peril in our midst." In an attic with a sloping roof a German spy sat at a table on which were spread maps, plans, and a note-book; also

"DADDY DONS THE RESPIRATOR."

"ABOARD THE ZEPPELIN."

"ARRESTED."

the relics of a characteristically German supper. The spy was a round-faced man with a heavy moustache and horn spectacles. Unsuspecting, he filled the china bowl of his pipe. Standing in the doorway, a special constable covered him with an automatic pistol. If you were hypercritical, you might wonder how the man with the camera happened to be there just at that moment. Otherwise it was a picture of compelling reality. A Hun who had been born and brought up in the business could not possibly have looked more like the prevalent idea of a German spy than Mortimer Ludlow did.

It was just after taking the photograph that Osman, who paid few compliments, congratulated Ludlow on the impersonation.

"That's the best piece of character you've done."

"Ah!" said Ludlow. "But I was told I couldn't look like a German."

"Well, you don't want to fret about that; you can. You look so much like one that you wouldn't be able to travel home like it. I'll lay you a sovereign on it."

"And I'll take you," said Ludlow, promptly.

"Just as you are, mind—with those incriminating documents and that pipe-stem sticking out of your pocket."

"Just as I am—certainly."

"And if you get taken to a police-station?" said Osman.

"Then, of course, I lose. I should not have got home."

"That satisfies me," said Osman. "If I lose I lose five dollars. But if I win, that's five dollars for me and a hundred-dollar advertisement for 'Incidents Photography.' Yes, it's quite a bet."

It was seldom that Osman did anything so unbusiness-like as to make a bet, but that day he had made two good contracts and was consequently exhilarated. Already "Incidents Photography" promised so well that a further extension of the business and further expense seemed justified. Ludlow, as the head of what may by courtesy be called the dramatic side of the venture, had been instructed to engage another actor, while Osman himself was relegating more of the photographic work to two capable assistants. More was being spent on properties. The lady who hustled the typewriter in three different languages, and also understood book-keeping, wore upon her plain but intelligent countenance a look of satisfaction which may have been indicative of an increased salary. Undoubtedly, "Incidents Photography" was making good.

Ludlow was not in the least anxious about his bet. It was, he knew, our national habit not to interfere with strangers unless they obviously interfered with us. So long as he took his ticket—for in that disguise he did not mean to use his season—and paid for it in the usual manner, entered the railway carriage without treading on toes, produced an English newspaper, and spoke to nobody, he was sure that nobody would molest him. Possibly some fellow-traveller would remark afterwards in the privacy of his home that he had seen a chap in the train who looked uncommonly like a German, but it would not go beyond that.

And in the train from Neasden so far as the Finchley Road station it did not go beyond that. But at Finchley Road, by some perverse whim of destiny, Mr. Horace Pettibrew and Mr. Arthur Goode entered the carriage and seated themselves opposite to Ludlow.

You know the name of Horace Pettibrew, of course. You must have seen it at the foot of many letters to the editors of many papers. Before the war you learned his views on militant suffragettes, daylight saving, "What Ulster means," and the flannelette peril. But the war marked him at once as the most ardent, not to say the most excitable, patriot that the country had produced. Debarred by age, eyesight, varicocele, and circumference from actually doing anything for his country, he could still think and write; at any rate he could write. He wrote more than ever. He discovered the obvious at great length. He put his finger on the peril in our midst, on the canker at the nation's heart, at least once a week. Never before had he been so fervent, so foaming, so futile.

Arthur Goode was Horace Pettibrew's brother-in-law, and held him in high esteem. He believed that Horace was possessed of sources of information that were denied to ordinary beings. He went out for a walk with Horace every Sunday. He cut out all Horace's letters to the Press, and pasted them into a scrap-book. He was a humble follower after Horace. Apart from this characteristic, he was a grave, grey man, and suffered from dyspepsia.

These were the two men who sat opposite to Ludlow. They noticed Ludlow. They exchanged pregnant remarks about him in an undertone. And Ludlow observed their observations, and the devil of humour entered into him. These men suspected him, and it would be a joyous thing to make them suspect a little more.

He pulled out his maps and plans and

consulted them with ostentatious attempts at concealment. He displayed the aggressive German tobacco-pipe. Asked, with studied carelessness, by Horace, if he could oblige with a match, he replied with an accent so German that it should have received the Iron Cross. He inquired if the train went to Baker Street, and left it with hurry and agitation at St. John's Wood. In fact, Ludlow took liberties and brought trouble upon himself.

He emerged from the station at St. John's Wood quite pleased with himself. He had had a little joke at the expense of the two imbeciles who had sat opposite to him in the train, and he was now going to walk home through Regent's Park. And, incidentally, he was going to win a sovereign.

And then—the bugle of the Boy Scouts caused him to look over his shoulder—he saw close behind him the two imbeciles whom he had encountered in the train. They marched side by side. Their look of portentous determination would have been excessive in the Light Brigade at the moment of their historic charge. Ludlow began to wonder.

Of course, it might have been merely a coincidence that these two men had got out at the same station as he had and were now taking the same route. But Ludlow did not think it was a coincidence. These men were

"HE PULLED OUT HIS MAP AND PLANS AND CONSULTED THEM WITH OSTENTATIOUS ATTEMPTS AT CONCEALMENT."

obviously trying to look as much like sleuth-hounds as an ordinary modern costume, coupled with certain physical disabilities, would permit. They had the well-marked sleuth-expression. Probably they would just follow him home, and in that case no harm would be done. But it was conceivable that they might appeal to a policeman, and Ludlow had stage properties in his pocket which, though perfectly innocent, might seem suspicious and a subject for inquiry to the ordinary policeman. Of course, five minutes at the police-station would establish his identity, explain everything, and set him free again. But five minutes at a police-station would not only lose him his bet but would imperil his reputation with Osman for infallible judgment, and he had built up that reputation with some care. He cursed his folly in playing up to these two men; he had meant to fool them and to enjoy, in imagination, the wild stories they would tell, but he had never meant to spur them to action. And now the silly asses were acting.

Yes, clearly they were acting. While Arthur Goode, gaunt and grey, still guarded the rear, Horace Pettibrew came lolloping past the supposed spy at a majestic trot. There were suggestions about him of a steam-engine with too large a boiler and an imperfect valve. His objective was a park-keeper some fifty yards ahead. Somewhat excitedly he requested the park-keeper to seize Herr Ludlow and detain him until reinforcements could be brought up.

The park-keeper smiled pleasantly, but shook his head. For if he were to arrest everybody in Regent's Park who looked like a German, he would not only be acting *ultra vires* and likewise *contra pacem* and to the scandal of the Government, but he would also have to work overtime. Briefly, he said as much. He was, it is to be feared, not without a suspicion that our eminent *littérateur* had looked upon the wine when it was red.

The park-keeper resumed his occupation of watching the peacock, and Horace Pettibrew fell back upon his main body, to wit, Arthur Goode. Ludlow observed the failure of this first effort with relief. Wisdom suggested that he should now turn back and explain all in his best English to the two amateur detectives. But this did not seem to be a very sporting thing to do; wisdom is rarely very sporting. And an alternative had suggested itself. His observations on the contour of Horace Pettibrew had led him to believe that this gentleman was not constructed either for speed or for endurance

"HE STARTED OFF AT A GOOD PACE. HORACE PETTIBREW PURSUED."

Neither did Horace's elderly *collaborateur* suggest the athlete. Ludlow now had the open park before him. Why should he not make a dash for it?

He started off at a good pace. Horace Pettibrew pursued. Also ran, Arthur Goode. Ludlow could feel the earth shake behind him. He could hear the breathing of Horace Pettibrew — breathing of so pronounced a character that it gave adjacent nursemaids an erroneous impression that the lions were being fed. Arthur Goode, in a high and plaintive voice, called: "Stop that man! Stop him! Stop him!" And general interest was being excited, rather too much of it for a man of Ludlow's modest disposition.

But the roadway was near, and in the road there would be a taxi, and the taxi would mean salvation. Ludlow turned sharply down a path to the left and found himself confronted by a special constable with arms outspread.

Ludlow stopped at once. "I say," he said, without any trace of a German accent, "these two silly men will keep following me about. I haven't a notion what they want. I wish you'd deal with them."

"They were calling to me to stop you," said the special. "I shall hear their story directly. Meanwhile, I'll just take your name and address."

Horace Pettibrew had fallen back some distance, having had trouble with his carburetter. But Arthur Goode arrived, gasping, with faint querulousness: "German spy — plan of Woolwich in his pocket— most dangerous — handcuff or shoot at once!"

And then Mortimer Ludlow had reason to bless that wise dispensation which ordains that special constables shall hunt in couples. For there now arrived upon the scene a second special, with a copper badge in his button-hole and an armlet on his forearm,

and this second "special" chanced to be that charming comedian, Herbert Basinghall.

Basinghall recognized Ludlow at once, criticized his make-up unfavourably, and proceeded to take command. A grocer's boy, with siphons in a basket, was dispatched to tell that fat man to hurry up a little. Arthur Goode was asked questions and told to hold his tongue simultaneously. Horace Pettibrew, on his arrival, closely guarded by the errand-boy, found that the tide had turned against him.

Basinghall gave an excellent performance. Here was a professional gentleman of the highest possible standing, a personal friend of Mr. Herbert Basinghall, being annoyed and chivied about in a public park simply because a couple of ignorant fools chose to think they were detectives. There were other and better ways in which they might serve their country. (Here Mr. Horace Pettibrew was told to wait till he was spoken to.) Mr. Ludlow had his legal remedy, of course, and it would be for him to say if he would avail himself of it. "In the meantime, sir"—this to Mr. Arthur Goode—"you and your fat friend there will give me your correct names and addresses, and I tell you, frankly, that an eye will be kept on you. Hold your tongue, sir. And let me warn you against any further interference with peaceable British subjects. You won't get off as easily again. Now, then, clear out, unless you want me to take you to the station. Don't answer back. You heard my orders. Not that way. Get outside the park."

Messrs. Pettibrew and Goode retired, and noted with sorrow that the feeling of the small crowd which had gathered was all against them.

"Old enough to know better, I should say," was the expressed opinion of one charwoman who was taking the air with her offspring. "Two thorough blackguards, as you could see by their faces. You let that be a lesson to you, Willy."

Naturally, Horace, when he reached home, wrote a scathing letter to the Press on the subject of special constables, in which he called them jacks-in-office and other wicked names. And it would have been some comfort to him if the letter had been published. But it betrayed animus, and the editor happened to be a special constable himself, and there was a pressure of news. So the opinions of H. Pettibrew on this subject still remain unreported.

Later that evening Special Constable Basinghall dined with Ludlow at an unpretentious restaurant, and afterwards reviewed the situation.

"I don't want to be bitter, my dear boy," said Basinghall, "but Fate shows us some strange reversals. A few months ago you snatched the bread out of my mouth. Of course, I'm not blaming you, and quite understand how it happened, but the fact remains that you did take from me the work which—well, it was dear to my heart, it was the summit of my ambitions. To-day comes my turn, and I rescue you from bandits—from two men who, but for my intervention, would have blackmailed you to your dying day. I know the type. And meantime I starve. Figuratively speaking, of course. Capital dinner this, and all that, but still——"

"Looking for work, eh?"

"I do not hide it. I am."

"Well, I've got a job to offer you at our place—'Incidents Photography,' you know—but that wouldn't be worth your while."

"Tell me, my dear boy, tell me. But let me give you one word of warning. You know my price—forty pounds a week. Don't offer it. In war-time I take twenty-five and will not take more. We must all hang together. These are not days for high salaries."

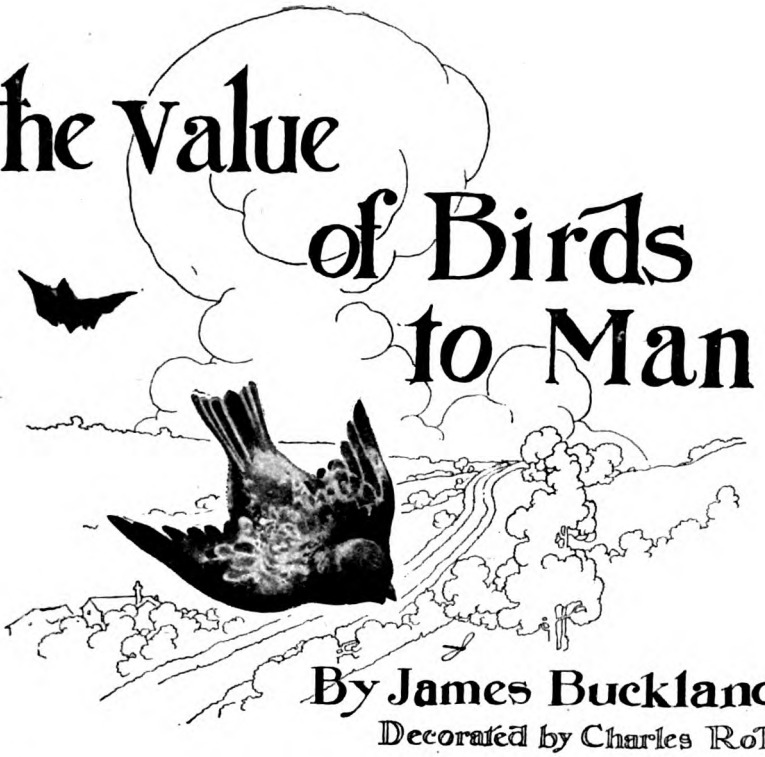
"This is only for five mornings a week. It's three pounds a week to start, rising to five."

Basinghall took a tooth-pick and meditated. "These details don't interest me," he said, finally. "Anything or nothing, I should be only too proud to work for 'Incidents Photography.' The salary is of no importance."

"Then that's all right," said Ludlow, cordially, and they shook hands on it.

"Of course," said Basinghall, "if you could get the old man to make it guineas—but, however——"

The Value of Birds to Man



By James Buckland
Decorated by Charles Robinson

Number, Fecundity, and Voracity of Insects.

MAN imagines himself to be the dominant power on the earth. He is nothing of the sort. The true lords of the universe are the insects. While it is true that man has invented and perfected so many destructive agencies that he has attained to a predominance over the most fierce and powerful mammals and the most deadly reptiles, it is also true that in face of an attack of insects he and all his works are set at naught.

Few people know how enormous is the number of insect species or how amazing is their power of multiplication. The number of insect species is greater by far than that of the species of all other living creatures combined. Over three hundred thousand have been described, and it is considered not improbable that twice that number remain to be described. Practically all living animals, as well as most plants, furnish food for these incomputable hordes.

The fecundity of certain insect forms is astounding, the numbers bred reaching such prodigious proportions as to be almost beyond belief. Riley once computed that the hop aphis, developing thirteen generations in a single year, would, if unchecked to the end of the twelfth generation, have multiplied to the inconceivable number of ten sextillions of individuals. Noting the preceding, Forbush says if this brood were marshalled in line, ten to the inch, it would extend to a point so sunk in the profundity of space that light from the head of the procession travelling at the rate of one hundred and eighty-four thousand miles per second would require two thousand five hundred years in which to reach the earth.

Kirkland has computed that one pair of gipsy moths, if unchecked, would produce enough progeny in eight years to destroy all the foliage in the United States.

A Canadian entomologist states that a single pair of potato bugs, or Colorado beetles, as we call them, would, without check, increase in one season to sixty million. At this rate of multiplication the disappearance of the potato plant would not be long delayed. Those of you who have been in South Africa probably have seen locusts in

flight which filled the air and hid the sun. What a potency for evil lies hidden in the tiny but innumerable eggs of these ravening pests! If every egg were permitted to hatch and every young locust to come to maturity, the consequences would be too dreadful to contemplate.

The voracity of insects is almost as astounding as their power of reproduction. The daily ration in leaves of a caterpillar is equal to twice its own weight. If a horse were to feed at the same rate, he would have to eat a ton of hay every twenty-four hours. Forbush says that a certain flesh-feeding larva will consume in twenty-four hours two hundred times its original weight, a parallel to which, in the human race, would be an infant consuming, in the first day of its existence, one thousand five hundred pounds of beef!

Mission of the Bird in Organic Nature.

Who or what is it that prevents these ravening hordes from overrunning the earth and consuming the food-supply of all? It is not man. Man, by the use of mechanically applied poisons, which are expensive, unnatural, and dangerous, is able to repel to an extent the attacks on his orchard and garden. Out in the fields and in the forests he becomes, before any very great irruption of insects, a panic-stricken fugitive. Neither is it disease, or the weather, or animals, or fungi, or parasitic and predaceous insects within their own ranks. However large may be the share of these particular natural agencies in keeping insects in check, experience has shown that it is lamentably insufficient. Then what is it? The bird. Bird-life, by reason of its predominating insect diet, is the most indispensable balancing force in Nature. Yet man has been engaged in the past half-century in the blind and wanton destruction of this essential part of Nature's great plan. He has taken no thought of the needs of the hour, nor concerned himself with the wants and claims of those to come. Within the space of a few years, under no constraint of necessity, he has carried out a policy of destruction more effective than that accomplished in centuries by the slow processes of Nature. It is not for man to say what shall live and what shall be destroyed. In the great struggle for existence each living organism is constantly striving to increase its numbers, while the similar efforts of other organisms by which it is surrounded, and which feed on it, operate continually to check its undue multiplication. Any serious disturbance of this action and reaction of natural forces is always fraught with serious consequences. As man destroys the insect-eating birds, the insects on which they feed, being left without check, become too numerous, and consume the food supply of all. This fact agriculture has learned to its cost in many parts of the world.

Serious Consequences of Bird Destruction.

Some years ago the agriculturists of Hungary, moved to the insane step by ignorance and prejudice, succeeded in getting the sparrow doomed to destruction. Within five years the country was overrun with insects, and these same men were crying frantically for the bird to be given back to them, lest they should perish. The sparrow was brought back, and, driving out the hordes of devastating insects, proved the salvation of the country.

During the year 1861 the harvests of France gave an unusually poor return, and a commission was appointed at the instance of the Minister of Agriculture to investigate the cause of the deficiency. By this commission the deficiency was attributed to the ravages of insects which it was the function of certain birds to check. These birds, it appeared, had been shot, snared, and trapped throughout the country in such numbers that but little repressive influence had been exerted upon the insects. It was concluded that by no other agency than the birds could the ravages of insects be kept down, and the commission called for prompt and energetic remedies to prevent the destruction of wild-bird life.

For some years prior to 1877 vast numbers of red-winged blackbirds were poisoned in the spring and autumn around the cornfields of Nebraska. This was done in the belief that the blackbirds were damaging the crops, especially the wheat. Great numbers of prairie chicken, quail, plover, and various other insect-eating species were destroyed at the same time by eating the poisoned grain. Then came 1877, and with it Nemesis. The locusts appeared in countless numbers. There were no birds to eat them, and Nebraska mourned.

Though I could give a hundred cases similar to the foregoing, I must rely on the few here cited to show that the wholesale destruction of birds is surely followed by disaster to man.

Value of the Bird in Checking Insect Irruptions.

When the Mormons first settled in Utah their crops were destroyed utterly by myriads of black crickets that streamed down from the mountains. Promising fields of wheat in the morning were by evening as bare as though the land had not been sown. The first year's crop having been destroyed, the Mormons had sowed seed the second year, and again the crop promised well. But again the crickets appeared, devouring every blade of wheat, and the followers of Joseph Smith were on the verge of starvation. At this juncture Franklin's gull came by hundreds of thousands, and, feeding greedily on the crickets, freed the fields of the pest. The settlers at Salt Lake regarded the advent of the gulls as a heaven-sent miracle, and practically canonized the birds.

Since that hour this black-headed gull has remained a faithful servitor of the farmers of Utah. To show a befitting and seemly sense of gratitude for its inestimable services in guarding the State from the ravages of insects, a monument to this bird has been erected in Salt Lake City.

It is a common practice with all settlers in a new country to at once set about killing the native birds in a thoughtless and foolhardy way. This stupid practice is all the more deplorable, because an enormous increase of insect pests invariably attends the operations of the pioneer agriculturist. Finding in cultivated crops new and more succulent sources of food supply, insects change their primitive habits to swarm and multiply exceedingly upon the fertile fields of man's creation.

When the farmers in New Zealand began to break the virgin soil on an extensive scale, a certain caterpillar, which hitherto had gleaned a somewhat meagre sustenance from the scanty native verdure of the open lands, disappeared from its old haunts and attacked the cultivated areas. So speedily did it increase by reason of a more favourable environment that it soon became a blasting plague. It came not singly, nor even in battalions, but in mighty armies which laid waste the land. I have seen these atoms cover the pastures in such numbers as to make the green one brown. I have seen countless millions of them pass out of one cornfield, having stripped every stalk bare, cross the road in solid phalanx, and pass into another. I have seen big mobs of sheep mustered in hot haste and driven to and fro over these serried ranks that they might crush them with their scurrying feet. I have seen every horse-roller in a district brought up hurriedly, like steam-engines to a fire, and drawn backwards and forwards over the crawling masses until the cylinders stuck fast in a mire of squashed insects. I have seen huge ditches dug in an attempt to stop the invaders' progress. The effort was as futile as that of a child who builds a bank of sand by the sea, thinking it will stem the oncoming tide. Even railway-trains were brought to a standstill, the wheels of the engines being unable to grip the rails owing to the hordes of caterpillars which were crossing the line.

In time it became abundantly clear that if this disastrous condition of affairs continued it would be useless to attempt to carry on agriculture in New Zealand. Realizing that any attempt which they might make to rid the smitten land of the plague would be but a mockery, the farmers turned their eyes longingly to the natural enemy of the caterpillar—the bird. But the native birds — though they had lived in closest companionship with the Maoris—had been taught the treachery of the white man in a school that reeked with blood, and those that had not been killed had retreated from the vicinity of the settlements, visiting the insect-ridden fields occasionally only.

Wherefore insectivorous birds from the old country were introduced, and the one that multiplied most rapidly was the common house-sparrow. And *Passer domesticus* soon cut short the career of the caterpillars.

As digestion is exceedingly rapid in birds, and as they feed for the most part throughout the day, they are peculiarly adapted for the suppression of abnormal outbreaks of vegetable as well as of animal life.

That formidable imported weed, the Scotch thistle, threatened at one time to overrun the whole of New Zealand. Much time and money was spent by the settlers in cutting off the plants close to the ground, and in

pouring turpentine upon the split stumps, hoping thereby to kill the roots. Vain labour. The wind-driven clouds of thistle-down, which were planting the weed far and wide, grew yearly denser and more frequent. At length the fields became a packed growth of prickly plants, which nothing could face. The sparrows took to eating the seed. In tens of thousands they fed on it, giving it the preference of all other hard food, and the weed was conquered.

To-day in New Zealand the sparrow is looked upon as an impudent thief without a redeeming feature in its character. No one, of course, can say what would happen if the bird was dismissed from the country, though it is probable that the Dominion would be again overrun with caterpillars and thistles.

Parenthetically I may mention that, though I have written here in defence of the introduction of the European sparrow into New Zealand, I am not an advocate of acclimatization. It is true that one can point to cases where a foreign bird has been introduced to perform the function of a native species that has been driven out, and where that function has been performed satisfactorily. But, as a rule, such substitutions are fraught with danger. Birds so rapidly change their habits in new surroundings that few species remain loyal to the reputation for honesty which they enjoyed in the land of their origin. Like most aliens, it would have been better had they remained in their own country.

The moral of this is that it behoves every man who has the welfare of his country at heart to do all in his power to foster native birds.

In Australia a plague of grasshoppers periodically visits the fields to devour the crops. The ruin they would otherwise bring on the farmer is averted by the good offices of ibises and other native birds. As a destroyer of grasshoppers, the straw-necked ibis (*Carphibis spinicollis*) has no equal among birds. Dudley Le Souëf, the director of the Melbourne Zoological Gardens, some years ago visited a rookery of this bird in the Riverina, and, after a careful estimate, came to the conclusion that the minimum number of birds breeding there was two hundred thousand. He procured a number of specimens and ascertained by actual counting that the contents of an average crop of an adult bird were two thousand four hundred and ten young grasshoppers, five fresh-water snails, and several caterpillars, which, multiplied by two hundred thousand, amounts to a total of four hundred and eighty-two million and odd grasshoppers, as well as vast numbers of caterpillars and snails. "Then, again," says Mr. Le Souëf, "the average number of young is about two and one-half to each pair of parent birds, and the contents of their stomachs must reach an enormous total, as they all seemed gorged with food."

As this enormous amount of food is being eaten every day by ibises in Australia during the hatching-time of the grasshoppers, some little idea can be formed of the immense utility these birds are to the farmer.

In addition to its great value as a destroyer of all-devouring insects, the straw-necked ibis feeds with avidity on the fresh-water snail—the host of the dreaded liver-fluke, which sheep so easily get in certain damp localities.

Again, were it not for the locust-birds, whose habitat is influenced by the presence or absence of locusts, there are many localities in United South Africa in which agriculture would perish.

The Value of Birds in Forests.

Omitting all mention of many another notable instance of the quelling of insect outbreaks by birds, I will pass at once to the consideration of those perennial services which act as a constant check on the undue increase of insects, rodents, weeds, and other pests.

Birds attain their greatest usefulness in the forests, because the conditions there closely approach the primeval.

Forest trees have their natural insect foes,

to which they give food and shelter, and these insects, in turn, have their natural enemies among the birds, to which the tree also gives food and shelter. Hence it follows that the existence of each one of these forms of life is dependent upon the existence of the others.

Consider for a moment the life of a tree in connection with the insects that prey upon it. At the very beginning, before the seed or nut has germinated, it may be entered by a grub which destroys it. Should, however, the seed or nut be permitted to grow, the roots of the seedling may be attacked by beetles. Escaping this danger, a worm lays its eggs in the cracks of the bark. On hatching, the worm or borer perforates a hole in the stem. This hole, admitting water from every passing shower, causes a decay in the wood to commence, from which the tree may never recover. Other borers feed upon the bark, eating the soft inner layer and the sap. The twigs are affected by the larvæ of certain beetles, which act as girdlers, sometimes destroying limbs over an inch in diameter. Weevils bore under the bark and into the pith, making excavations in which the eggs are laid. For the same purpose the cicada makes a terrible wound, which often proves fatal. The limbs of trees are affected by aphides, which puncture them and feed upon their juices, exhausting the sap. Many species of plant-lice and scale-insects infest trees, doing great damage, while over a hundred different species of gall-flies are parasitic upon them.

It is difficult to perceive the usefulness of these insects which feed on the different parts of the tree, though they may, perhaps, when in normal numbers, exert a useful influence by a healthful and necessary pruning. It is certain, however, that if they were not in turn preyed upon by birds they would so increase in numbers that the tree could not survive the injuries they would inflict.

How dependent trees are on birds for their existence may be gathered from the following illustration: As many of you probably know, trees breathe through their leaves. Consequently, if the buds of the leaves are prevented from developing, or are eaten, when developed, by caterpillars, the tree is weakened. Many coniferous trees will die if stripped of their foliage for one year. Deciduous trees, if deprived of their respiratory organs for several years in succession, will also perish, though these trees linger, as a rule, for two or even three years before finally succumbing.

Woodpeckers or other birds of similar feeding habits would have flown to the rescue of the tree and possibly saved its life; but when that corrective influence is missing, the tree must die.

This illustration of the dependence of the tree on the bird and of the bird on the tree is, of course, but one of a long series that could be cited, and it is because of this most delicate adjustment between the tree, the insect, and the bird that I regard as profoundly true Frank M. Chapman's statement "that it can be clearly demonstrated that if we should lose our birds we should also lose our forests."

The Value of the Bird in the Orchard.

For man's purposes the work of the bird in the orchard is not so thorough as that done by them in the forest. Birds are the slaves of Nature, and, in the main, Nature's endeavours are put forth only to produce such fruits as will insure the perpetuity of each species of tree. With man the case is altogether different. His main object is not the propagation of trees, but the production of a giant gooseberry. Moreover, by introducing arsenical spraying, tarred and greased bands, and other devices to counteract the evil action of insects, he has, to a certain extent, taken upon himself the office of the bird.

But what would happen to the poorer

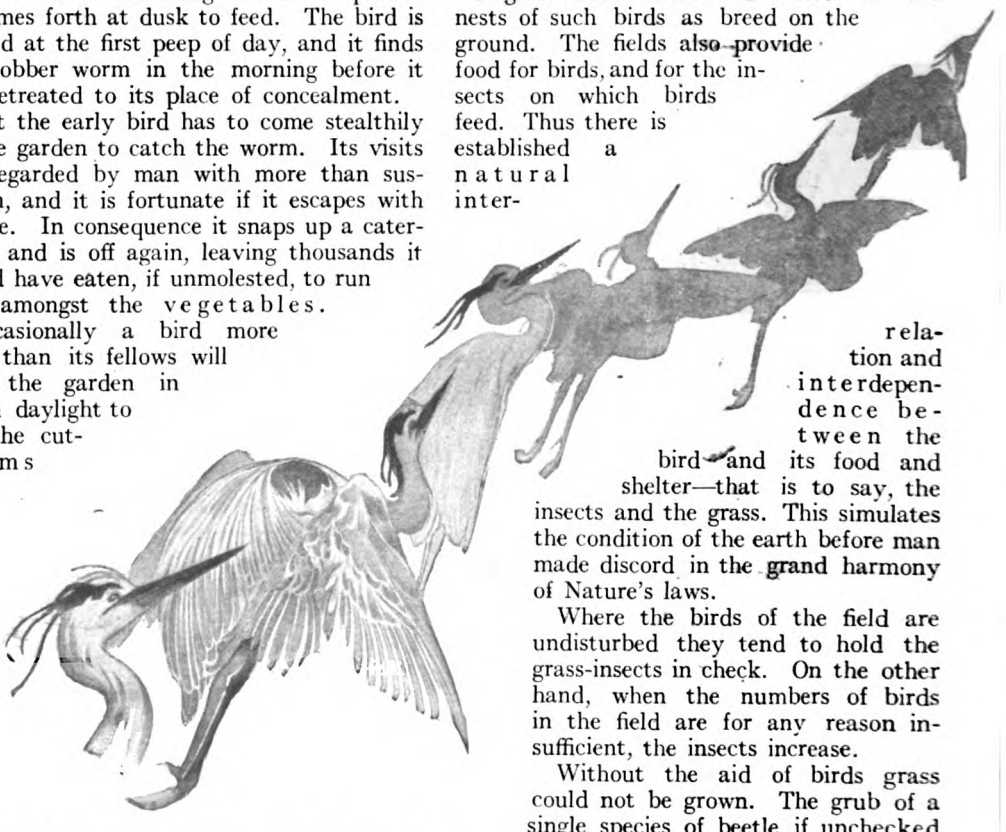
class of fruit-growers if they were deprived of the services of the bird is best seen in what happened to Frederick the Great. This worthy, in a fit of passion because a flock of sparrows had pecked at some of his cherries, ordered every small bird that could be searched out to be instantly killed. Within two years his cherry-trees, though bare of fruit, were weighed down with a splendid crop of caterpillars.

The Services of the Bird in the Garden.

The garden is the insect's paradise. It fares sumptuously every day on the most succulent of vegetable foods. Every opportunity is thus offered for its increase. The greatest insect enemy of the gardener is a small, dull-coloured, hairless caterpillar known as the cut-worm, which is the larva of a Noctuid moth. This chief of the brigand band of garden pests usually hides during the day beneath matted grass or under the loose soil along the rows of plants. It comes forth at dusk to feed. The bird is abroad at the first peep of day, and it finds the robber worm in the morning before it has retreated to its place of concealment.

But the early bird has to come stealthily to the garden to catch the worm. Its visits are regarded by man with more than suspicion, and it is fortunate if it escapes with its life. In consequence it snaps up a caterpillar and is off again, leaving thousands it would have eaten, if unmolested, to run riot amongst the vegetables.

Occasionally a bird more bold than its fellows will visit the garden in broad daylight to dig the cut-worms out of their hiding-places. Nature never having begrudged it the reward of its toil, the bird takes a few peas before leaving.



The gardener notices the damage done to his peas, and next morning is up betimes. He sees the bird running along a row of peas, stopping frequently to peck at something on the ground. There is a loud explosion, followed by a puff of smoke. The smoke slowly drifts away, to disclose a bird lying dead.

Mark the sequel. One fine morning the gardener issues proudly forth to cut his mammoth cabbage—the one with which he intends to put to utter confusion all other competitors at the local vegetable and flower show. Alas for human hopes, and the depredations of caterpillars! The cabbage is riddled like a colander.

The gardener when he shot the bird forgot, if, indeed, he ever knew, that the ancient law forbade a muzzle to the ox that thrashed out the corn.

Utility of Birds in the Meadow.

Each season, until hay-making commences, the grass offers cover and shelter for the nests of such birds as breed on the ground. The fields also provide food for birds, and for the insects on which birds feed. Thus there is established a natural interrelation and interdependence between the bird and its food and shelter—that is to say, the insects and the grass. This simulates the condition of the earth before man made discord in the grand harmony of Nature's laws.

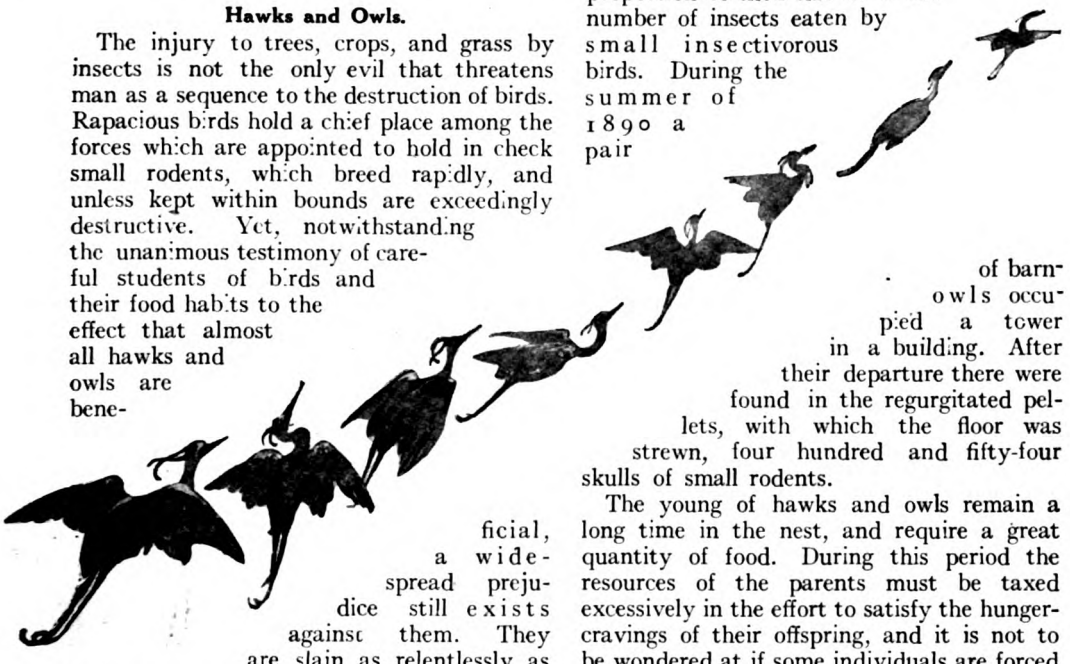
Where the birds of the field are undisturbed they tend to hold the grass-insects in check. On the other hand, when the numbers of birds in the field are for any reason insufficient, the insects increase.

Without the aid of birds grass could not be grown. The grub of a single species of beetle, if unchecked in its multiplication, could destroy all the roots in our meadows; or any one of the several species of cut-worms, if its reproduction were not restrained by birds, might

be sufficient to destroy all the verdure above ground.

Hawks and Owls.

The injury to trees, crops, and grass by insects is not the only evil that threatens man as a sequence to the destruction of birds. Rapacious birds hold a chief place among the forces which are appointed to hold in check small rodents, which breed rapidly, and unless kept within bounds are exceedingly destructive. Yet, notwithstanding the unanimous testimony of careful students of birds and their food habits to the effect that almost all hawks and owls are beneficial, a widespread prejudice still exists against them. They are slain as relentlessly as if they were enemies instead of friends of the farmer.



The destructive habits of the small rodents, which are the natural prey of hawks and owls, are much the same all the world round. They do an incalculable amount of damage to standing corn, to corn in the stook or when stacked, to grain, to root crops when growing or when piled on the ground or stored in pits, to orchards and forest trees, to the roots of clover and other grasses, to ground-growing fruit, and to gardens, both flower and vegetable. In addition to this list of crimes, certain rodents are active agents in carrying and disseminating the germs of plague and other diseases.

Here in England—though, on account of their small size and secretive habits, they are often undiscerned by man's dull eyes—they swarm in such numbers in the fields and hedgerows that the damage they do must prove a steady drain on the resources of the farmer.

The number of small rodents eaten by the rapacious birds is almost as remarkable in proportion to their size as is the number of insects eaten by small insectivorous birds. During the summer of 1890 a pair of barn-owls occupied a tower in a building. After their departure there were found in the regurgitated pellets, with which the floor was strewn, four hundred and fifty-four skulls of small rodents.

The young of hawks and owls remain a long time in the nest, and require a great quantity of food. During this period the resources of the parents must be taxed excessively in the effort to satisfy the hunger-cravings of their offspring, and it is not to be wondered at if some individuals are forced occasionally to snap up a chicken. But what is the worth of the chicken, or of the young pheasant, occasionally taken, compared with the hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of damage that is wrought in the orchards and fields by rodents that hawks and owls, had they been spared, would have fed upon for the maintenance of their species?

Kaffirs say, "He who kills a hawk must be put to death."

The Economic Value of the White Heron.

The destruction of the white heron for its scapular plumes has robbed half the world of a bird which is most useful to man. It never touches grain, but feeds solely near water and over damp ground, the breeding-places of innumerable batrachians, small crustaceans, and pestiferous insects, all of which directly or indirectly injuriously affect crops in the neighbourhood. The presence of the white heron in the rice-fields, for

instance, is distinctly beneficial to the farmer, and rice is one of the most extensively-grown crops of India and of China.

In his report on Egypt for the year 1912 Lord Kitchener stated that the indiscriminate destruction of bird life had allowed an enormous increase of insect pests, steps for the combating of which were to be taken. Lord Kitchener knew that in spite of the improved methods of fighting insects there was only one step that he could take which would be effective. A Khedivial decree was issued forbidding the catching or killing of, or taking the eggs of, Egypt's insectivorous birds. In issuing this decree the fact was not lost sight of that in the valley of the Nile the egret is one of Nature's checks on the cotton-worm.

Another fact not to be lost sight of is that recently a large sum of money was granted by the British Government for the purpose of experimenting in cotton-growing in the Soudan. If the present-day slaughter of the egret in this region is permitted to continue the experiment can end only in disaster.

White herons consume many flies, as well as the larvæ of insects in water. This fact is well known to those who have watched the habits of oxen and buffalo in Asia or Egypt. There the smaller white herons—the paddy birds of India—live with the oxen or the buffaloes, and pick the flies or the ticks from their bodies.

The late George Grenfell noted once on the Congo how a dying white heron, which he had shot and put into his canoe, roused itself, even on the approach of death, to snap at the tsetse flies which were settling on his boatman's legs.

Value of Birds to Live Stock.

The injury done to domestic animals by biting and parasitic insects is very great. Herds of cattle are often stampeded by these tormenting creatures, which carry disease and death among them. Another great affliction is the warble, which is a small tumour produced by the larva of the gadfly on the backs of cattle, and the constant irritation of which causes considerable depreciation in the value of hides, besides a lessened quantity and poorer quality of beef.

Horses, sheep, and other farm animals are subject to the attacks of similar parasites and other persecuting insect foes.

If it were not for the services the bird renders in alighting on animals in search of these parasites, or in catching the flies on the wing or in eating them in the embryo state, man would be unable to keep his live stock.

More than this, man himself would be unable to inhabit many places on the earth which he now cultivates, or where he carries on other lucrative industries.

Game Birds as Weed Destroyers.

Unquestionably weeds serve a useful purpose in Nature, but that purpose is not the occupation of cultivated land. Without check they would speedily choke all grain to death.

Constant use of harrows and hoes will do much on farm lands and in gardens to keep down weeds, but as most earth is full of weed seed, which retains its vitality for years, the life of the tiller of the soil is one continuous struggle against these troublesome plants. In this battle the bird is of great assistance, for the number of weed seeds eaten by birds on cultivated land must be beyond any assignable quantity.

Game birds generally are the greatest eaters of weed seeds. They are also useful to man in several other ways. Not only do they devour mature locusts, but they scratch up and eat the eggs. They also consume in large quantities termites

and other equally pernicious insects. The reckless shooting of game birds is to be deprecated. They are of far more use alive than in swelling the bag of the sportsman.

The quail is perhaps the greatest weed-destroyer of all the game birds. It is doubtful, indeed, if the quail is not more useful to man than any other bird. It is very nearly wholly beneficial. During spring and summer it feeds on many of the most destructive of insects, and in autumn and winter it eats an enormous amount of seeds of many harmful weeds.

There is therefore—now that Great Britain has harnessed Old Nile—a plain economic reason for revolt against the present-day practice of catching Egyptian quail and shipping them abroad in hundreds of thousands to please the palate of the gourmand.

The Bird as a Scavenger.

The fishing population of these islands has declared war on the gulls, and is demanding the withdrawal of certain species from the list of protected birds, on account of the damage they are alleged to do to the fishing industry. People who believe fishermen's tales are apt to be duped and led into repeated errors. The gull is a surface feeder. It may occasionally levy toll on useful fish, but to say that it does any appreciable injury to the fishing business is absurd.

On the other hand, the presence of the gull is essential to man's health. While the bird fulfils many useful minor offices—such as destroying larvæ inland along the seaboard and in eating enemies of fish that are exposed during low tide—its chief function in the economy of Nature is that of scavenger of the harbours and of the littoral, just as vultures are the scavengers of the mainland. The wholesale destruction of gulls for their plumage in Yucatan was followed by a great increase of human mortality among the inhabitants of the coast, which mortality was irrefutably due to the loss of the birds that had kept the harbours and bays free from the decaying matter which the sea is constantly casting ashore.

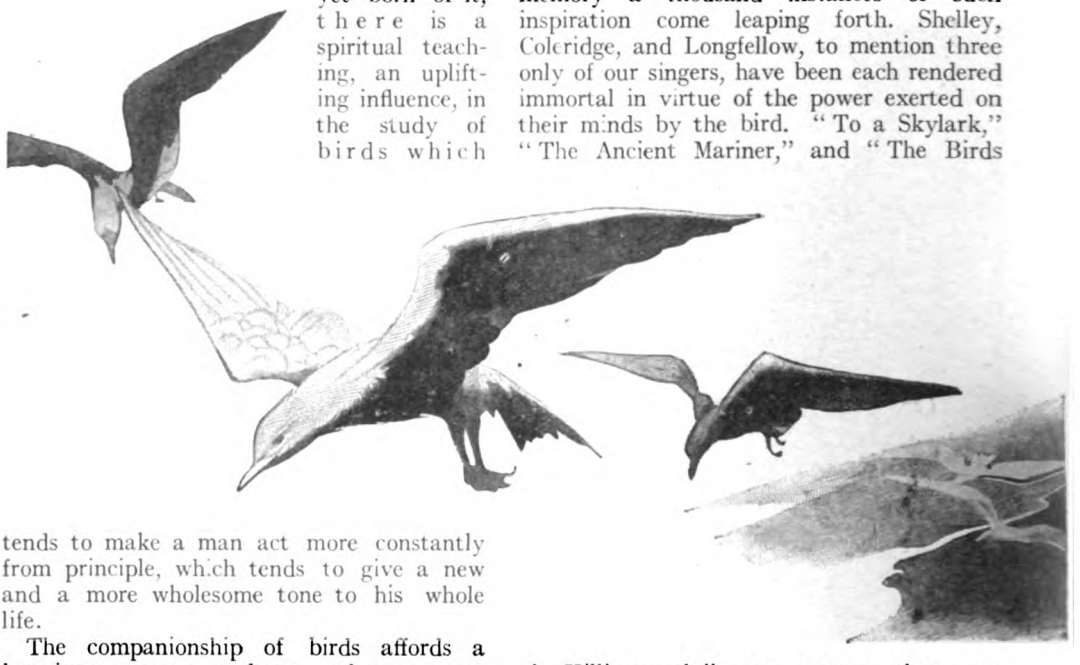
I wonder if these men who wish the gull destroyed ever give a thought to what would happen to their own smelling villages if this bird was not present to eat the refuse they throw about? Or, again, if they ever reflect on that feeling of relief they experience when in thick weather they hear, through the fog, the clamour of these feathered bell-buoys, warning them that they are nearing rock or bar?

The Æsthetic and Sentimental Value of Birds.

Omitting all mention of various other material benefits which birds confer on man, I will, before concluding, notice briefly their æsthetic and sentimental values.

Bird life is the part of the creation in which Nature

has done more in the way of bestowing mental benefactions on man than in any other of her works. Unconsciously received, yet born of it, there is a spiritual teaching, an uplifting influence, in the study of birds which tends to make a man act more constantly from principle, which tends to give a new and a more wholesome tone to his whole life.



The companionship of birds affords a happiness as pure, perhaps, and as permanently exquisite as man in his present state of being can possibly enjoy. Never came purer joy into my life than when, rising at dawn from my couch of fern, I heard the approach of the coming day heralded by a chorus of glad bird voices. Never have I experienced emotions which have so lastingly impressed my mind as when, in the inexpressible mystery of the darkened forest, with the stars drifting over, I listened to the sublime notes of some feathered psalmist, itself in night invisible.

The world itself is but an outline sketch; it is the birds which fill in the details and complete the picture. Towered vapours of the summer firmament hang on the wall of the sky against a setting of immutable blue; the trees are motionless; the glassy waters of the lake too idle to curve and break upon the shore. Nothing speaks of life or action. Suddenly, hitherto unseen in leafy tracery, a bird rushes out and up into the air, telling the sunshine all its joy. One can almost hear the mechanism start. The world begins to live and move. What artist is there who does not know this? Even when painting either of the two most majestic scenes on the earth—the ocean or the Himalayas—he adds this stimulating power to his canvas.

To turn from the palette to the pen, what poet is there who has not been inspired by birds? From the background of my memory a thousand instances of such inspiration come leaping forth. Shelley, Coleridge, and Longfellow, to mention three only of our singers, have been each rendered immortal in virtue of the power exerted on their minds by the bird. "To a Skylark," "The Ancient Mariner," and "The Birds of Killingworth" are poems that are imperishable.

The birds of paradise! While the world lasts no man will ever rise up to create aught so exquisite. Their beauty is supreme—supreme in capricious graces of form, linked with capricious graces of colour, which simply captivate the whole spirit, and lead it to adoration.

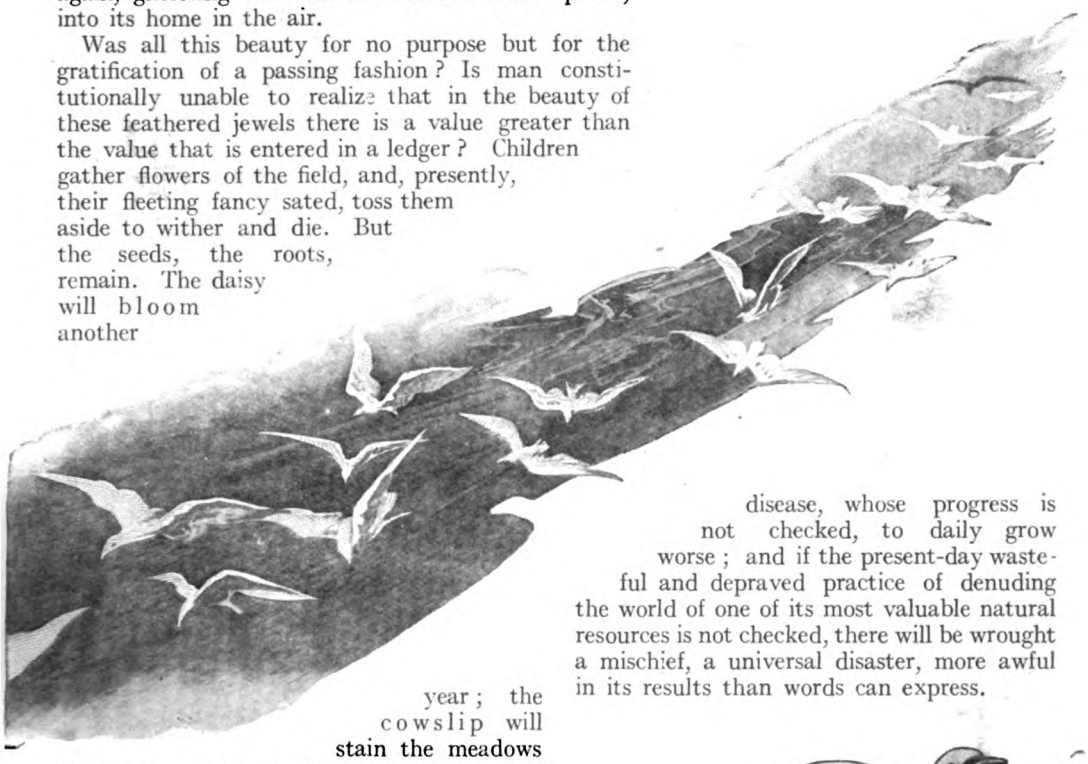
Such works as these were not made for vulgar desecration; yet no family of birds whose plumage is used in millinery is being hurried out of existence with greater speed than the birds of paradise.

The Mexicans felt the poetry when they looked upon the humming-birds as emblems of the soul, as the Greeks regarded the butterfly, and held that the spirits of their warriors who had died in the defence of their religion were transformed into these exquisite creatures in the mansion of the sun.

Earth holds no joy to the eye more sweet than the sight of one of these living gems as it flits to and fro with the shrillest vibration of swiftly-beating wings, hovers for an instant in the shade of a pendulous blossom, shoots out again into the sunshine, darts away after an insect, wheels round and round in sheer exuberance of spirit, returns to sip at the nectared cup, then flashes up

again, glittering with all the colours of the prism, into its home in the air.

Was all this beauty for no purpose but for the gratification of a passing fashion? Is man constitutionally unable to realize that in the beauty of these feathered jewels there is a value greater than the value that is entered in a ledger? Children gather flowers of the field, and, presently, their fleeting fancy sated, toss them aside to wither and die. But the seeds, the roots, remain. The daisy will bloom another year; the cowslip will stain the meadows yellow as of yore; but these blossoms of the air will never bloom again. Once gone, they are gone for ever.



Conclusion.

Birds unquestionably are one of man's most valuable possessions, yet it is just the possession on which he sets the least value.

Wherever there are birds whose plumage is suitable for millinery, there will the cruel and rapacious agents of the feather-dealers be found engaged in orgies of wasteful destruction. Wherever there are speciesthat have been harried by man to the brink of extinction, there will be the collector also, anxious to obtain the last lingering representatives of a race before his rival gets a chance to do so. Wherever there are birds whose eggs are valuable, there hurries the egg-collector to destroy, not only the embryonic life, but often the mature life as well by shooting the bird that laid the egg. Wherever in the wild places of the earth there are birds which are considered to be "good sport," there saunters that vandal of creation, the hunter of means and leisure, to expend on the most beautiful and the most harmless works of Nature his instinctive desire to kill.

It is the nature of infamies, as well as of disease, whose progress is not checked, to daily grow worse; and if the present-day wasteful and depraved practice of denuding the world of one of its most valuable natural resources is not checked, there will be wrought a mischief, a universal disaster, more awful in its results than words can express.

BLOOD MONEY

By

AUSTIN PHILIPS

Illustrated by

EMILE VERPILLEUX

"DON'T forget, Daphne! Four o'clock to-morrow!"

"All right, Rosie. I'll come!"

Rose Faulkner handed her golf-bag to her *fiancé;* he took it and slung it upon his shoulder: side by side they began to hurry across the Heath in the direction of the Shooters Hill Road. Daphne Moore and her companion walked more slowly towards Montpelier Hill. The sun—the wan, adventuring, morning sun of February—came out to light their faces, which were flushed with exercise, yet not with exercise alone. The man's cheeks—though wind-tanned thoroughly—burned bright in two places. The girl's temples, pale ordinarily, were crimson; and her lips quivered, although they were closely pressed.

Neither of them spoke for a minute or two. The same thought was in the heart of each. The man, less schooled to hide his feelings, had to put them into words.

"Is it about her wedding? Is that why she wants you to go round?"

"Yes; it's her *trousseau*—and the presents. I sent her one last week!"

"You never told me!"

"No; I—I forgot!"

The girl stopped. The man—Dennis Ord—answered nothing, though he knew that she had not spoken the truth. Her omission to tell him of Rose Faulkner's imminent wedding had been deliberate, intentional; due to a single cause. She had wanted to spare him worry; to save him needless pain.

It was not until they were going down the hill into Blackheath Village that he showed her that he understood.

"Everybody else, Daphne!" he said, bitterly. "Always another pair than us. They only got engaged six months ago. It makes me feel horribly bad!"

"Why should it?" Daphne shifted the iron club which she carried from right hand to left hand and put her free arm within his. "I can wait. I'm very happy. I can see you every day!"

"Yes; but it's your people, Daphne—after that business last year."

"That's all over—for ever. I told them I was going to stick to you. They won't make trouble any more."

The man was silent. They walked on farther. Then, impelled by that extreme sensitiveness which is twin brother to a stainless conscience, he had to speak again.

"Daphne," he said, jerkily, "I don't want you to be too sanguine—I don't want to raise your spirits without reason. I shouldn't have said anything—at present—if we hadn't met those lucky two. But I can't help telling you that it's just possible that something may happen to help me to make money soon!"

"Dennis! Much money?"

"Enough, with what I've saved already, to buy a practice almost at once!"

"But where's it coming from?"

Dennis Ord hesitated. They were in Lee Terrace now, outside her father's house; she stood looking up at him with blue eyes which her sports coat matched so wonderfully; hands in pockets, head raised and slightly sideways; strands of red hair, in which that sun of February was sparkling faintly, peeping truant and rebellious from beneath her knitted cap. It was not easy to say "No" to a woman as fair as she.

But Dennis steeled himself. He had the instinct for thoroughness in all things; he had not yet himself the knowledge that he needed; and this was not time or place. And, for all that they had been engaged three years and that they saw each other daily, he took and held her hand.

"I can't tell you, dear, immediately; you must wait four or five hours. Come and see me across the way when lunch is over. I have no appointments between two and half-past."

"Very well. But, Dennis, why not tell me now?"

"No, Daphne. I must get back to breakfast at once."

He swung round quickly, turned again, waved his hand, turned finally, and began to run—on his toes, for he was in the pink of condition—back along Lee Park and down the hill into the village once more. He pulled up at the station, entered, went up to the bookstall and addressed the clerk in charge.

"Has that *Telegraph* come, please?"

"Yes, sir."

The man produced the newspaper. Dennis put down a coin. The man shook his head and smiled.

"No, sir—not a *penny*. Five shillings, if you please!"

"Five shillings!"

"Yes, sir; a shilling for every year."

Dennis, to whom, because of Daphne and the future, every halfpenny was of importance, frowned and found the coins. Then, *Telegraph* in hand, he began to hurry up the hill towards his rooms in Groates' Place. On the way he opened the paper, changed his mind, thrust it into one of his big pockets, and again started to run. It was after eight already; he and Daphne had dallied talking to Rose Faulkner and her future husband who, like themselves, had been playing golf on the Heath before breakfast, as was the habit in their special set. He reached his rooms, changed hurriedly, went into his sitting-room, poured out some tea, tore open the paper, propped it against the sugar-basin, and began to read. Ten minutes later he turned to eggs and bacon; they were cold, but he swallowed them down. He helped himself to bread and marmalade and began to read again, forgetting what was on his plate. When next he glanced up, the clock on the mantelpiece told him it was a quarter to nine. He pulled out some nail-scissors, cut out three columns, folded them, thrust them into his pocket-book, and hurried out, down through the village and up the hill beyond. The house of the dentist to whom he was assistant was in Lee Terrace, exactly opposite to the house where Daphne lived. Indeed, she and Dennis had first come to know each other intimately through meeting in the road each day.

He let himself in with a latch-key and went straight to his surgery; it was light, agreeable, airy; only the lower portions of the windows were blinded, and the sun lay in patches on the floor. Dennis filled the electric kettle, put in the wall-plug, then set his finger on the bell-button, giving three distinct rings.

The mechanic entered, clad in a white linen coat.

"Good morning, sir," he said.

Dennis looked at him. Not without an effort he repressed a tremble in his voice.

"You've repaired the thing I asked for?"

"Yes, sir." The man handed over a small piece of vulcanite. "It isn't often we see one of these."

"No"—Dennis looked anywhere but at his interlocutor—"not in this class of practice, at least. It's for a new patient. He was here for the first time the other day."

The mechanic nodded comprehendingly and returned to his workshop. Dennis washed his hands, went to his cabinet, took out probes and mouth-mirror, and put them on the swing bracket-table beside the operating chair. Nine struck as he finished. The maid entered the room.

"Mr. Gardner, sir," she said.

"Send him in!"

"Yes, sir."

The maid departed, and returned again, ushering the patient in. He was a man of singular aspect, about forty years of age.

He was of middle height, quick, well-built, nervous; his face had the hatchet contour of the North American Indian; his mouth was a mixture of obvious sensitiveness and potential harshness; he gave the impression of having once had immense vitality which had degenerated into great nervousness, and his flesh was of a curious earthy pallor which

told of very poor health. He wore a double-breasted suit of a cut so old as to have become the latest fashion, and the material of it was a blue-and-white-striped flannel, such as is now seldom seen. He brought with him—as on the occasion of his first visit—a definite sickly scent. It was the odour of napthaline—which told that the clothes which he was wearing had long been folded away.

The heart of Dennis Ord began to bump furiously; yet as but now, in the presence of the mechanic, he managed to control his voice.

"Good morning," he said, professionally. "We have repaired your plate for you. I am going to fit it now."

The patient climbed into the operating chair. Dennis glanced at the angle of his head.

"How is that?" he asked. "Yes, I thought so; a little farther back."

He lowered the head-rest suitably. Then he began to fix in the man's mouth that small piece of vulcanite which the mechanic had brought him, and which had no teeth attached. And he worked with mouth-mirror and probe.

"Is it quite comfortable?" he asked.

"Perfectly, thank you. You seem to have made a very good job."

Dennis nodded. He made a movement to put down his instruments, then stopped.

"Would you like me to have a look at the rest of your mouth?" he asked. "There may be some teeth which need attention as well."

"Thank you. I have been travelling for some time, and am always very busy; so that I have had no leisure to have them looked at for several years."

Dennis began his examination. Presently he paused.

"The teeth are in very good condition, considering," he said. "Two of them require filling. I will prepare them now."

He began. When it became necessary to use the drill, he lowered the head-rest still more. It was then that something which he

"'YES,' HE BEGAN. 'PERHAPS I HAD BETTER SEE A DOCTOR. I AM A STRANGER TO THIS

had already noticed became more apparent than before.

"Have you been suffering from sore throat lately?" he asked.

"Yes. I've tried all sorts of remedies, but none of them seems any use. I think I must be run down."

Dennis glanced at him curiously. Over and above the interest—the enormous interest—which the man had excited in him; beyond, too, the tremendous issues of that interest, his medical instincts were aroused. Apart from the inflamed throat, he had only to look at the nervous hands, the earthy pallor of the complexion, and the tired, bloodshot eyes with the pouched bags beneath them, to see that the man was more than ordinarily ill.

"Yes; you don't seem very fit," he answered. "You are certainly somewhat run down!"

The patient waited until the first tooth was prepared for filling; then, as he sipped the warm water from the stand beside him, he looked up and spoke again.

"Yes," he began. "Perhaps I *had* better see a doctor. I am a stranger to this neighbourhood. Whom do you recommend?"

Dennis started. For a few seconds he stood hesitant; in his heart he was cursing his own indiscretion; why had he trespassed beyond the straight path of dentistry; what foolish impulse had led him to comment upon the man's health? To send him to a doctor at this moment might ruin everything. But he could not, in common decency, refuse.

"Dr. Hollis, in the Lee Road, is as good as anyone," he answered. "He was at Guy's in my time, and he took exceptionally good degrees."

"Thank you. And at what time shall I find him at home?"

"Between two and three, for certain. And in the evenings, usually; and in the mornings from nine till ten."

The patient lay back again. Dennis finished his task. The man rinsed his mouth and rose.

"And what day shall I come again?" he asked.

Dennis shivered. He had no doubts now about what was going to happen when the next appointment was kept. But he thought of Daphne and himself and their future, and his sensitiveness passed away.

"To-day is Tuesday," he answered. "To-morrow? I am busy in the morning. I can give you three-thirty in the afternoon."

"Thank you. That will do very well indeed."

The patient descended from the operating chair and walked doorwards, but Dennis, moving quickly, managed to interpose. Instinctively—the idea was too swift for thought almost—he pointed at a picture on the wall. It was a piece of sentimentality in keeping with his employer's taste.

"What do you think of that engraving?" he asked, quickly. "Mr. Kenyon bought it only the other day."

The patient glanced at it. Then he shrugged his shoulders and turned his tired eyes upon Dennis's face.

NEIGHBOURHOOD. WHOM DO YOU RECOMMEND?'"

"Oh, it's all right," he said, contemptuously. "It's good enough, of its kind!"

He passed out without further comment; the door closed upon him; Dennis hurried across to his desk. He sat down, drew out his pocket-book, took the cutting from the *Telegraph*, found certain marked paragraphs, and read them through again and again. The maid announced another patient; he told her to keep the lady waiting for a while; he felt, for the immediate moment, too upset, too excited, too happy, to be steady enough to work. For now he was absolutely certain; he had no longer a shadow of doubt. He had no qualms whatever; he was going to do what he ought to do, and to be rewarded when it was done. And he felt that he could tell Daphne everything at two that afternoon.

He rang the bell, sent for the patient, and worked all the morning with a glad and singing heart. He lunched with his employer, made an excuse to leave the table early, and hurried back to his own room. He stood at the window, watching for Daphne; he saw her cross the road. Her hands were in the pockets of her sports coat. She wore no hat, and, as in the morning, the sun shone feebly upon her hair, which seemed brighter than the sun itself.

Dennis ran out and greeted her, crooked his arm within her arm and led her into his room. She turned to him as he shut the door.

"Well," she asked, eagerly, "what is it?"

"Victory!"

"Victory?"

"Yes, we shall be married within three months. A stroke of good luck and a good memory have made things possible all at once."

Daphne stared at him in wonderment. He smiled triumphantly, took out the cutting from the *Telegraph* and thrust it into her hand. She began to read. Presently she looked up.

"What does it mean?" she asked. "I'm afraid I don't understand. What has this murder got to do with you and me?"

Dennis laughed. He took her arm gently and made her sit down on the couch on which so many people under anæsthetics had lain.

"I will tell you," he said. And he walked over to the hearth-rug and stood with his back to the fire.

"Five years ago—it was in my last term at the hospital—this murder happened; as you would have seen if you had finished reading the cutting, it was of no ordinary kind. A certain rising painter, named Hastings, in a wild fit of jealousy stabbed his wife with a palette-knife; it made a great sensation because the man, who had already begun to be talked about as an artist, managed utterly to disappear. And the wife's relations—they are rich people—in addition to the police reward, offered a special reward of two hundred pounds. They renew it yearly by advertisement in the *Times*' agony column on the anniversary of their daughter's death."

Dennis paused. He could see that Daphne was just beginning to understand.

"As I say, this happened in my last term at the hospital, and the painter's successful disappearance was a common topic of talk. He was believed to have escaped upon some foreign sailing vessel, for he had been a keen yachtsman, and wore a naval beard and moustache. Indeed, though no doubt he shaved immediately after the murder, it is as resembling a naval officer that he is described. He had one salient peculiarity—it was made the subject of a lecture to us at Guy's. This was, as the cutting explains to you, a cleft palate."

"A cleft palate?"

"Yes. It exists when the maxillary bones in the upper part of the mouth are not properly joined together at birth, and it is a condition fairly often to be found amongst the poorer classes, but rarely amongst the educated, because it is usually remedied by operation, very young. If you pass your tongue along the roof of your mouth, you will feel a little gulley in the centre. Well, with a cleft palate there is not a gulley but a gap."

"And this painter—the murderer—had it?"

"Yes. He had been born in St. Helena. He had been operated upon unskilfully, and he had ever afterwards to wear a plate. And—as I told you—such a condition in an educated person is sufficient to cause surprise. That was why I was suspicious when, a couple of days ago, a man came to me with such a plate for repair. There were other indications as well."

"What were they?"

"He had on clothes of a cut that was fashionable five years ago, and of a stuff which is out of favour just now. They smelled strongly of naphthaline, as if they had been long put away. Also, though without a beard or moustache, he had features which tallied with those of the missing man. His height tallied also, and I found out that he was a painter by his jargon when I praised a picture which I knew that all good artists would say

"DENNIS RAN OUT AND GREETED HER."

was bad. Personally, I have no doubt of his identity at all."

"But, Dennis, if he's a murderer, why does he come back to England? Why didn't he stay abroad?"

"Perhaps he never *went* abroad. Perhaps he had to come back. He had lived in London from childhood, and a murderer is said to be like a hunted hare, which always returns to her original 'form.' That doesn't concern me, anyway. I am satisfied of his identity. I have only to go to Scotland Yard and report matters, and in due course receive the reward."

"How much is it?"

"The two hundred pounds I told you of, offered by the parents, and the hundred given by Scotland Yard itself."

Daphne gasped. She caught hold of both his hands, pulled him forward, and kissed him on the lips.

"But it's magnificent!" she cried. "With what you've saved you can buy a good practice. And think of the advertisement. It will bring you business and fame."

"Yes." Dennis's mouth quivered. "And your people—they won't think me a rotter any more. Oh, I know only too well that they do!"

Daphne denied no longer what she had so stoutly refused to admit to him for all those last two years.

"Yes," she answered, "they have been perfect beasts about you ever since that awful scene we had, and they never stopped saying that you've deceived them about your prospects—as if you could help your uncle dying so unexpectedly and so poor. But never mind now. Everything is splendid. When are you going to see the police?"

"To-night. I shall go up to Scotland Yard, you know, and ask to see the man in charge."

"And if he won't see you?"

"He *will* see me. But I've written to the Home Secretary as well."

Dennis crossed to the desk, took the letter out of its envelope, and put it into Daphne's hand. She read it and handed it back.

"And no one else knows?" she asked. "About this cleft palate, I mean?"

"No one—except—I suppose Dr. Hollis will."

"Dr. Hollis!"

"Yes. The man was ill. He wanted me to recommend him a doctor. I thought of Hollis, who has just put up his plate. But it's all right. It isn't as if Hollis was a dentist, and——"

Dennis stopped. There had been a ring at the front door.

"That's a patient," he said. "I shall be busy till six o'clock. I shall go straight home then. Will you come up with me to town?"

"Yes. I'll come to your rooms and fetch you. In the meantime, I suppose I'm not to tell mother, or——"

"My dear!"

Dennis gasped his horror, then laughed as he saw that she had joked. He took her out to the front door, returned to the surgery, rang for the maid, sent for the waiting patient, and began to work.

It was a short job; he had finished it by ten minutes to three. There was an interval before his next patient was due.

He sat down at the desk in the corner, and re-read his letter to the Home Office, to make everything certain and sure. Now that it was all settled and he had leisure to think of it, he disliked the business of playing informer immensely; indeed, his distaste for it, in the beginning hardly felt by him, grew greater by leaps and bounds. But he had a duty towards society, as well as to Daphne and himself, and in a month he would have a practice, in three months he would be married, climbing another man's stairs no longer, working not for an employer but himself. How he would work! How he would show Daphne's people!

He looked up. There had been a ring at the telephone; he rose, lifted the receiver, and set it to his ear. He knew the voice immediately, and, with the initial consciousness, he became a prey to fear.

It was the voice of his friend, the young doctor whom he had recommended to the murderer in the matter of the sore throat.

"Is that you, Ord?"

"Yes. How are you, Hollis? What's up?"

"Oh, nothing special. But you know that chap you sent along?"

"Yes. What about him?"

"Oh, he's got a lovely——"

The doctor became technical. Dennis staggered, almost as if he had been struck. He managed to ask a few questions, to hear a few replies. Then he hung up the receiver and walked slowly back to his desk. He felt sick and shaken without any apparent cause. Because the news made no difference to him personally; the great thing was that the doctor had not recognized the man.

The door-bell, the maid's entrance, and the appearance of a patient stayed his thinking for a while. But not for long. He thought as he worked; he thought when alone again;

he thought as he stood by the operating chair throughout the tedious afternoon. It was one thing to discover a murderer and to denounce him; it was another to——. If it were not for that reward and Daphne's people he would tear up the letter to the Home Secretary and forgo the visit to London, and wait and plod on and save. But Daphne made it impossible. She would see it differently: women were more material than men. He owed her a duty—the duty of shortening an engagement which had been long, and which, without this piece of good fortune, would have lasted another three years. For himself it did not matter. But he did not stand alone.

The afternoon passed. Six o'clock came; he sterilized his instruments, put them away in his cabinet, and hurried through the village and up the hill. In his little, stuffy sitting-room, with its sporting pictures, its easy chair, and its golf-clubs, Daphne was waiting as arranged. She wore furs. Her eyes shone out deliciously from beneath a soft warm toque. But she looked graver than usual. Dennis thought that she even looked tired. It was reaction, he told himself, after the excitement of his news.

"Well," she said, "are you ready? Have you had anything to eat?"

"No. We can dine at the Popular in Piccadilly before we go on to Scotland Yard."

Dennis—he was still thinking desperately—had spoken dully and as if without heart for the business that they had in hand. Daphne stared at him. She knew his every inflexion; she could see that something was amiss.

"What has happened?" she asked anxiously. "You look worried. Is it—you don't mean that, after all, he isn't the man?"

Dennis did not answer. And Daphne jumped to the worst.

"You don't mean that the doctor you sent him to has guessed everything—and done you out of the reward!"

"No; not that."

"Well, what?"

"Hollis rang me up on the 'phone—just after you had gone. The man had been to see him about his throat. And Hollis wanted to tell me that he couldn't live three months!"

"What!"

"No, Daphne. He is suffering from a mortal disease."

Dennis stopped. Daphne said nothing. A long black silence fell upon the pair. Dennis's foot kicked at the fender, Daphne's shoe played with the pattern of the carpet; they looked up at intervals, showing each other strained and piteous eyes. It was as if they were both conscious of the way in which Fate was driving in upon them; as if, too, neither wished to take initiative in the choice which must be made. Silence became harder than speech presently. Daphne broke it, coming suddenly across the room.

"Dennis," she said, "Dennis, what are you going to do?"

"I don't know, Daphne. It's pretty awful. I'll do what you think best."

She nodded; they stood looking at each other; two ordinary people, fighting against their Fate. On the one hand lay comfort, competency, and release from worry, for the mere giving up to judgment of a murderer; on the other hand lay deferment of their marriage, the miseries of a prolonged engagement, the endurance of all the slights and discomforts of their present circumstances for at least another three years.

And this time Dennis was the first to speak.

"You know, Daphne, what it means!" he began at last.

"Not doing it—not giving him up?"

"Yes, Daphne—what we must sacrifice if we let him die in peace!"

She nodded. And she began to speak rather fast.

"I read the case—the cuttings, as you asked me, and I had begun to worry about—about going up to London—all the afternoon. I felt that even apart from the money it was only right to give him up to justice, but I felt sorry for him, too. He loved his wife—he seems to have been passionately devoted to her, but her parents made mischief and tried to get her away. They were succeeding—and he stabbed her in a fit of jealous rage. And I thought of you, Dennis. You know how terribly angry you were when father and mother tried to break off the engagement. You, too, are very jealous—that means that you love me—and I wouldn't have you anything else. But you know, Dennis, perhaps if you'd been ill and run down and worried, instead of being in splendid health, *you* might have gone mad for a minute and have done the same thing!"

Dennis winced. He *was* jealous—and he felt that what she said was true. Daphne went on slowly—fighting against herself and him—having gone over to Fate's side.

"Three months," she said, softly. "He has only got three months to live. If we—if we don't go to London—will he—will he suffer much pain?"

"Hollis said not. The end will come all at once."

"And how long does a murder trial go on?"

"DENNIS, WHO HAD LEFT CHOICE WITH HER, WAS AWARE IMMEDIATELY THAT SHE HAD SHUT OUT AT THAT MOMENT THEIR GOAL FOR A FULL THREE YEARS."

"Taking the police-court, the Old Bailey, and the time before —before the execution?"

"Yes."

"I suppose about three months!"

"Three months! And he would have just three months of life in any case if we didn't —if we don't give him up! Oh, Dennis, it would be too cruel! What are we to do?"

Dennis shrugged his shoulders. He turned, put his foot on the fender again, and stood looking into the fire. Daphne, who had been facing him, walked to one of the windows and threw it open wide. And the room became full of a distant rumble and roar.

The pavements were wet. It was raining. Through the moist, warm atmosphere the street lamps were sparkling in the distance; others gleamed like a row of far-off candles along the wall of Greenwich Park.

Daphne stood looking out. In the heart of her, as in the heart of Dennis, an enormous conflict was raging: materialism and self-sacrifice, rigidness and charity, all these things were at grips. Perhaps but for one other thing materialism and rigidness would have conquered hands down. That one thing was the atmosphere which surrounded them, the *milieu* in which they lived. They had been born in Blackheath, the narrowest and most respectable of all the suburbs; they had absorbed its outlook and its conventions, its teachings and its passion for games. For good or ill, in this crisis of their lives they were the victims of their environment; hardly had they personal volition; they were the servants of the life they had led. Games, games, always games; outside working hours it was all that they lived for; and they had absorbed the codes they pursued. Always to be sporting, never to take an unfair advantage, to forgo readily sooner than win in any but the cleanest of ways. To stab in the back, to betray a man who was dying was impossible to them now. Fools they might be—in the sight of some folks splendid—which, mattered not at all. What *did* matter was that they were the bondslaves of their characters, and that "character is Fate."

For a long while then, whilst Dennis looked into the firelight, Daphne stood without moving, her fingers upon the sill. Suddenly she gave a gasp, lifted her hands quickly, and shut the window down. And Dennis, who had left choice with her, was aware immediately that she had shut out at that moment their goal for a full three years.

She crossed the room towards him. Her eyes were full of determination; yes, and of exaltation, too.

"I can't do it," she said. "Dennis, it mustn't be!"

He nodded. He had not her temperament, her capacity for showing feeling; but his code was as lofty as hers. Ridiculous it might be. But it was the ordinary English code, whose ideals shall inform the world.

"I know," he answered. "I agree with you. We can't do this awful thing. Who are we to judge, anyway? I am no better than he. How do I know what I might have done in his place?"

In turn Daphne nodded. She had been grave, but now she smiled.

"Dennis, dear," she said, "give me the letter; let me put it into the fire."

Dennis smiled in answer. He put his hand into a pocket, withdrew the envelope, and in silence held it out. Daphne took it, glanced at it, and spoke almost beneath her breath.

"'Vengeance is mine,'" she said. "'Vengeance is mine'!"

She put a foot on the fender: a daintily-shod foot, half-covered with a well-fitting spat. The back of the envelope was uppermost. She turned it over in her hands.

"The Home Secretary," she read, "Whitehall, S.W."

And then, "Poor man!" she added. "He won't get it, will he, my dear?"

She laughed out aloud. Then, with a little sob, her long, white fingers tore the envelope and tore it again. She threw the fragments into the fire. It consumed them. Only a little trace of them—an ashen-grey paper—remained. That, too, went in a moment, drawn up the chimney by the draught.

Daphne turned to Dennis and met his eyes.

He put out his hand. She took it, and held it tightly in her own. Dennis gave an involuntary sigh.

"Three years longer, Daphne," he said, sadly. "Our dream—our dream of this morning is over for good and all!"

Daphne with her free hand patted very gently the hand which she held in hers.

"Yes, it is over," she answered. "But there are better dreams, my dear!"

RAMBLING REMINISCENCES.

By

H. B. IRVING.

Continued by Mrs. Irving (Dorothea Baird).

MAYBE it was because we were the sons of our father that my brother Laurence and I became actors. And this in spite of the fact that not only were any histrionic ambitions we may have had in our boyhood days discouraged by him, but the actual influence of his art upon our minds must have been small, for the simple reason that as boys we saw very little of him. He was always a very busy man in his profession, and we were seldom given the pleasure of a visit to the theatre. Few actors, I think, however, care to see their sons follow their own vocation. It is always an anxious and difficult life, and especially difficult at the start, and I feel that it was with the kindly thought of saving Laurence and me from the drudgery of the stage beginner that my father encouraged me to study for the Bar and helped Laurence to enter the diplomatic profession.

My own boy Laurence, who is an officer in the Royal Naval Air Service, has never evinced any desire to follow in his father's footsteps. As to my daughter, I won't presume to offer an opinion. My wife and myself, however, would not regret her taking up work on the stage were she inclined to do so, and provided her character and health were sufficiently established to stand the strain of leaving home and making her way in the world.

My father was interested in my early performances on the stage, though the results were not always encouraging. I remember his coming down to the Richmond Theatre to see me play Claude Melnotte in "The Lady of Lyons." I was very anxious to make as good an impression as possible on him, and put forth my best efforts. Unfortunately it happened to be the regatta night. When I reached that most important moment in the career of Claude Melnotte when he describes, in the rich language of Lord Lytton, his dream of "a palace lifting to eternal summers," etc., at this moment, when I wished to convey to my father what I thought the quiet beauty of my delivery of these lines, my whole plans were upset by a series of violent explosions caused by squibs, rockets, and maroons. The effect of these explosions was to entirely shatter my youthful hopes, and I could tell from my father's manner afterwards that, though he had been impressed by the Richmond fireworks, he had been rather depressed by my own.

I have said that, as boys, my father discouraged thoughts of the theatre. But he was not adamant, and he willingly acquiesced when we expressed a wish to play at theatricals at the home of the late Edmund Routledge. The play was "H.M.S. *Pinafore*." I was cast for the part of Captain Corcoran, while Max Beerbohm and Laurence, who were my juniors, were in the chorus. I remember that, being uncommonly lazy, I was discharged during the rehearsal for incompetence and inattention, but as no substitute could be found they were obliged to have me back, which was a doubtful advantage to the production, for my voice, which, I feel sure, must have had beauties of its own, was not very well adapted to certainly some of Sir Arthur Sullivan's music. Consequently certain important numbers in the part of Captain Corcoran had to be omitted.

However, the performance was, if I recollect rightly, sympathetically received by friends. After the play was finished there was a fancy dress ball, at which I remember seeing Sir Herbert Tree dressed as Hamlet. This was, of course, before he ever played the part. About this time—we were nine and ten respectively—Laurence and I played Charles and Joseph Surface at a performance in Knightsbridge of various scenes from Sheridan's "School for Scandal," and a short time later appeared at the St. George's Hall in "Pickwick," when I played the part of Master Bardell in the trial scene. I was a somewhat weedy child, and had to be padded for the part. Beyond having to upset some marbles and burst into tears at a given cue,

LADY IRVING.
AN INTERESTING AND HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED PORTRAIT OF THE MOTHER OF H. B. IRVING.
Photo. by Verneuil, Boulogne.

I had little opportunity for displaying those higher gifts which I am sure I thought at the time I most undoubtedly possessed.

It must not be thought that we regarded this play-acting seriously. We simply looked upon it as a pleasant pastime, and because our name was Irving people naturally took a kindly interest in the amateur performances in which we appeared. When I tell you, however, that at school we never indulged in theatricals, and my only elocutionary efforts were reciting at a few Penny Readings, you will understand that even if I had any ambition at this time to shine as an actor, it was not encouraged. As a matter of fact, I don't think I performed again until I left Marlborough and went into residence at Oxford; and it was there, when I took part for three years, appearing as Decius Brutus in "Julius Cæsar," Wentworth in "Strafford," and "King John," in the annual productions of the Oxford University Dramatic Society, that I first really tasted the pleasures of acting without the pains of having to earn a living by it.

Arthur Bourchier, Holman Clark, and Alan Mackinnon were my contemporaries, and it is generally said that I made my first appearance as an amateur up at the 'Varsity in 1889, but I wouldn't like to forget my performance as the Captain in "H.M.S. *Pinafore*." My feelings, by the way, were somewhat outraged on the occasion of my initial appearance for the O.U.D.S., when I found myself cast for the somewhat insignificant part of Decius Brutus. I was persuaded, in my own mind, that the name I bore, and my absolute want of experience, fully entitled me to play "leading business," and only the persuasions of a wise tutor prevailed on me to accept the modest *rôle* of the lesser conspirator against the life of Cæsar.

It was during a vacation in my Oxford days that I had the honour of meeting the late King Edward, then Prince of Wales. My father had arranged an exhibition of fencing, which took place on the stage of the Lyceum, and the Prince was present. At the conclusion my father presented me to him, and I do not think his late Majesty ever spoke to a more embarrassed young man. Perhaps I ought to mention the fact that I was, at that time, very eager to become an actor, my father, however, being

DOROTHEA BAIRD,
WHEN THREE YEARS OLD AND—

absolutely opposed to my wishes. And it was from the late King Edward that I received at least some encouragement, although he spoke but a few words. After I had been presented, he asked:—

"What is he going to be?"

And the reply which my father gave made me feel extremely small.

"Poor boy," said he, "he wants to be an actor."

"Well," queried the Prince, in a cheerful voice, "and if he wants to be an actor, why shouldn't he?"

If anybody in this world has ever been truly grateful, I was then.

At the same time, I was then, as now, so fond of legal study that it was with feelings of real pleasure that I entered as a student of the Inner Temple on leaving Oxford, the Bar being the profession chosen for me. But not for long. The theatre had a magic charm which I could not resist; and soon after leaving the 'Varsity I made my first professional appearance on the stage.

This is at all times an agitating occasion, however pleasant may be the circumstances in which it takes place. And mine were very pleasant, as I appeared at the Garrick Theatre under the kindly auspices of Sir John (then Mr.) Hare in a revival of "School" on September 19th, 1891. Nor have I anything to complain of in my treatment at the hands of that great source of terror to the novice, the Press. They were most forbearing, for I know I was not good in the part I played; if they told me so, they did it in a most considerate fashion.

AT THE AGE OF FIVE.
Photos. Byrne, Richmond.

I must say that my *début* caused me much agitation and nervous perturbation. And I have never been able to conquer that feeling of nervousness on first nights, which pass sometimes like a dream and sometimes like a nightmare. Even experience does not make one any less nervous or apprehensive in regard to each new production. I have often said before a first night, "Well, if I get through this part all right I shall never be nervous again"—a most erroneous notion, the falsity of which I have proved with unfailing regularity on the next similar occasion.

There is always an electricity in the air on a first night, an eager excitement that occasionally has curious results. An odd little incident happened on the first night of my father's production of "The Corsican Brothers" at the Lyceum. Sir Arthur Pinero, who had a small part in the play, entered from the back of the stage in the first scene. It was evidently regarded as an important entrance, for the audience,

watching with obvious eagerness for the appearance of the "star," burst into loud applause. They were determined not to be caught a second time, however, for my father's entrance a little later passed practically unnoticed.

The patience of the first-night audience is remarkable. So long as the play is good they will forgive anything in the way of slips and long waits, and will help the actors over ever so many stiles. At the first night of "The Admirable Crichton" I remember something went wrong on the stage, and the waits were so terribly long that the play finished about half-past twelve. In spite of this, however, the audience waited patiently for the final triumphant fall of the curtain. But, of course, "The Admirable Crichton" was a remarkably fine play and bound to succeed in the face of every difficulty. I do not say it because I acted in it, but I sincerely think that it is one of the best plays that Sir J. M. Barrie has written.

H. B. IRVING (wearing cap) AND HIS BROTHER LAURENCE.
Photo. Window & Grove.

H. B. IRVING, WHEN THREE MONTHS OLD.

I might mention that of all the modern parts I have played, Crichton is undeniably my favourite. Though I played it over three hundred times, I never grew tired of it. There was a charm about the part and the play which prevented it becoming wearisome.

Referring again for a moment to my first professional appearance, some people have thought it curious that after playing at the Garrick I left the stage for a couple of years and resumed my studies for the Bar, being called in 1894. It must be remembered, however, that when I first appeared at the Garrick I was only twenty-one years of age and very unsettled in regard to my future, because I was divided between my affection for the stage and my interest in the law. Furthermore, I was not satisfied with my appearances at the Garrick, kind though everybody had been, and at times thought that perhaps the law was my forte. The call of the stage, however, was again too strong. But when I finally bade the law good-bye and reappeared on the stage at the Comedy Theatre in "Dick Sheridan," I recognized the fact that I needed wider experience of parts and a better knowledge of the technique of the stage than I was likely to obtain by acting in London.

I was fortunate to find a provincial manager who would take me on as his "leading man"—Mr. Ben Greet—and as a member of his company I played an exceptionally useful repertoire that gave one the chance of tackling such diverse parts as Othello and Charles Surface, Hamlet, and Julian Beauclerk in "Diplomacy," and many others in Shakespeare and the old comedies. To any young actor this was a golden opportunity, and it was one's own fault if one did not make good use of it.

Whether I was right in after years in taking up such unique characters as Mathias in "The Bells," Charles I. in Wills's play,

H. B. IRVING AT THE TIME OF HIS MARRIAGE, AND HIS WIFE (DOROTHEA BAIRD) AS "TRILBY."

Photos. Kay & Ellis & Walery.

Dubosc and Lesurques in "The Lyons Mail," and others, not least among them Louis XI. in Boucicault's excellent version of the French play by Delavigne—parts which my father made so famous—is, of course, a question which the public alone can answer. Naturally they have always had a peculiar interest for me, and it was the popularity of "The Lyons Mail" which led me to have great hopes of that other "double-part" play, "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." My father, as well as myself, was greatly fascinated by this double character. But Robert Louis Stevenson would not consent, in my father's time, to dramatize the story, although urged to do so for the sake of getting Sir Henry in the double part.

"No!" writes "R. L. S.," emphatically, in the "Vailima Letters," "I will not write a play for Irving, or the devil! Can you not see that the work of falsification which a play demands is of all tasks the most ungrateful?" The swing of time, however, brought a dramatic version by Mr. Comyns Carr, which, I venture to think, is the best dramatic version of the story that has been made.

Perhaps no two plays have given rise to more questions from the curious than "The Lyons Mail" and "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde"—questions arising from the doubling of the parts. To answer here the many letters I have received on the subject, I may be permitted to point out that in the latter play I have no "double" because I do not leave the sight of the audience for a single second. But in "The Lyons Mail" I do have a double.

In this play I enact the two *rôles* of Joseph Lesurques, the Parisian merchant, and Dubosc, the notorious robber and murderer. The question to which I have most frequently been asked to reply is something like this: "Just prior to the end of the play Dubosc is seen in his garret struggling in the hands of the angry crowd, and while they are still treating him to rough usage Lesurques, who has just narrowly escaped the gallows, rushes in. At that time do you appear as Dubosc or Lesurques?"

I will let the readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE into the secret. What actually happens is this. The door of the garret is situated in one of the side walls, and as the people outside force it inwards Dubosc is swung back with it and is momentarily covered from the audience's view. This is the instant in which the change is effected. My double enters while I exit through an aperture

in the wall behind the door. It is he who falls back from the door into the hands of the mob, while I, having quickly made the necessary alteration to my appearance, enter simultaneously as Lesurques.

There is no trickery, however, in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." I do not leave the stage. Such change as I make is done in sight of the audience in as lightning a manner as possible.

As in the case of my father, criminal plays have always had a certain fascination for me, and, I think, up to a point for the public, while the task of writing and editing the various books on criminology which bear my name was a real pleasure to me. My inclination towards the study of crime is partly inherited and partly acquired. My father was fond of studying the psychology of the criminal who was out of the common order. I have always been attracted by cases of poisoning, and this class of murder invariably gave my father food for thought.

MR. AND MRS. H. B. IRVING,
IN J. M. BARRIE'S PLAY, "THE WEDDING GUEST."

For instance, I have heard him dwell more than once on the peculiar case of William Palmer, the medical practitioner who did to death many people, including his wife and brother. As usual in these cases, he was only put on trial for one specific murder. He was ably defended, and the evidence against him was purely circumstantial, but the proof was too strong, and the prosecution, led by Sir Alexander Cockburn (afterwards Lord Chief Justice), secured a conviction, and Palmer was duly hanged in front of Stafford Jail. This was in 1856, but my father, who had attended the trial could recall every detail. Another case which interested my father, from the point of sheer callousness was the murder of Patrick O'Connor by the Mannings in 1849.

While the public here, however, are invariably interested in criminal plays, I found during our tours of Australia and South Africa in the last four years that the people of the Colonies have an extraordinary affection for Shakespeare. In June, 1911, we opened at Sydney with "Hamlet," which was so popular that it would easily have carried us through the whole of our ten weeks' stay in the city. And that was our experience everywhere. "Hamlet" would have been sufficient. We scarcely needed anything more. The people simply crowded the theatres to see it, and never seemed to tire of it although we played "The Bells," "The Lyons Mail," "Louis XI.," and "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." In South Africa, too, "Hamlet" was warmly welcomed, although one incident which occurred shows, I think, that there is still a novelty in Shakespeare, and that some people have really only a hazy recollection of his most famous characters and the plays in which they figure.

We were playing "Hamlet" in one of the principal towns, and when Polonius made his first entry a lady in the stalls turned to her neighbour and remarked:—

"Ah! I suppose this is Shylock?"

The same thing might, of course, happen in London.

Need I continue this autobiographical sketch of myself? I really do not think so. My life since I left Sir George Alexander, to whom I owe so much, in 1900, after remaining with him for nearly five years, covers such recent events that it seems like chronicling the doings of yesterday to tell of any

happenings. Rather would I prefer to take advantage of the editor's courteous request to say something of my wife. But as I feel that she is more competent to do this than myself, I have asked her to supplement what, I fear, is a somewhat rambling account of my aspirations and my work, with whatever story she is pleased to tell you. Perhaps, however, I may be permitted to make one or two remarks about the theatre of to-day.

We are in war-time, and like everyone else that is the only question for us at the moment. We are naturally very proud that, like other professions, we have sent our share of brave fellows to fight for their country. Fifteen hundred out of eight thousand actors! Not bad! We are very thankful, too, that the seas that divide us and the ships that protect us make it possible to carry on our business as usual, and so prevent such widespread distress as is being felt among theatrical people in the countries less fortunate than England. Happily this has enabled us to give substantial help to others besides ourselves, and one of our chief sources of satisfaction has been the ability to send a goodly sum to aid our comrades in France and Belgium, Russia and Serbia, upon whom the war has fallen very grievously. Naturally, we have all had to make sacrifices in these times, but one can very truly say that all connected with the theatre have done everything in their power to help to meet new conditions.

Of course, the theatre is only an amusement—or shall we say a relaxation?—but in war-time perhaps more than in any other many people must stand in need of relaxation and relief from the strain that is on us all, and perhaps none more than the soldiers who are back from the Front. I was very pleased to read in the *Times* a most interesting account of the return of a soldier from the Front to his family, and the writer said that the first thing the soldier seemed to want was to be taken to the theatre. So you see, though we are only an amusement, yet we have our use!

CONTINUED BY MRS. IRVING.

THE request is flattering. But I feel somewhat diffident in complying because, having definitely retired from the stage three years ago, I do not think that the public, which took such a kindly interest in my theatre doings, are so much concerned about me now.

For a number of years before I left the stage, and long before I ever dreamed of being elected a member of the St. Pancras Board of Guardians, I was interested in social work. Indeed, I may say it was my first love. I distinctly remember in my school days designing *crèches* during an algebra lesson. I was very, very happy in my school life, and it is a curious coincidence that my own little daughter is being educated at the same school under the same mistress. Another fact which has a particular interest for me is that our school, which is one of the Girls' Public Day School Trust, when I was young was one of the pioneers of the women's education movement.

I found school-days extraordinarily engrossing. In fact, almost too much so for my parents' liking. I recall a holiday in Italy, where those who were with me were fascinated by the beauty of Lake Como, and yet all the time I was thinking only of what they were doing at school and longing to be back. But I was keen on acting, even in those early days, and in one instance I remember being nearly broken-hearted because in one of the little plays we acted I was not allowed to appear in the doublet and hose of a fairy prince, but had to don an overall.

I smile when I think of my enthusiasm for the old school, and fear my daughter would hardly write, as I did, "This school is quite equal to harow, winchester, and E ton." At any rate, I am sure she would give these great seats of learning capital letters, spell Harrow with two r's, and remember that Eton had nothing to do with eating.

On leaving school I went to live at Oxford, and it was there, while playing for the O.U.D.S., that I received my first offer of a theatrical engagement from Mr. Ben Greet. As it afterwards proved, this was the most momentous event of my life, for a certain young gentleman, known to his friends as Harry Irving, who had been reading for the Bar, had taken to the stage and was Mr. Greet's leading man, and—well, we decided, after twelve months' association in Ben Greet's company, that our first meeting, which took place in the bar of the Lyric Theatre during a rehearsal, had been designed for our happiness.

I remained with Mr. Ben Greet for about a year, playing Hippolyta, Helena, Paulina, Rosalind (my favourite), and other Shakespearean characters. It was my appearance

in the latter in the Pastorals at Stratford-on-Avon which led Sir Herbert (then Mr.) Tree to engage me to play Trilby, and I always feel that my engagement for this part ought to put good heart into all those young people, for whom I am always sorry, who are engaged in the unpleasant task of understudying, which seems to offer so little chance. I was not really understudy to anyone in Mr. Greet's company, but, like most girls of that age on the stage, I had ambitions. Although I was playing but minor parts, I learned parts which I hoped to play some day. The result was that on one occasion, when the leading lady was unable to play Rosalind through illness, her understudy being also indisposed, I was able at twenty-four hours' notice to play the part. The next night I was "walking on" as one of the crowd in "Much Ado About Nothing." By wonderful good fortune, however, my portrait as Rosalind appeared in a certain illustrated publication. Mr. du Maurier saw it, thought I might play Trilby, recommended me to Sir Herbert Tree, and thus by pure chance I was able to seize one of the great opportunities of my life.

A CHARMING EARLY PORTRAIT OF MRS. H. B. IRVING WITH HER DAUGHTER.

You may imagine how startling it was in the circumstances for me to receive a message from Sir Herbert Tree that he would like to see me, and how pleased and excited I was when he offered me the part of Trilby. He did not ask to see my feet. Nobody saw them until the first night, although some people seem to think that they were prominently connected with my engagement for the part.

While Rosalind, however, was thus connected with this success in my life, it was also concerned with a grievous disappointment.

About the time I played the part, for "one night only," a dinner was given by certain people of Stratford-on-Avon in celebration of Mr. Greet's return with his company. I knew that only the leading members of the company would be invited, but thought that I too might be included in the invitations. For I very much wanted to go, particularly as a certain Harry would be there. And I was frightfully in love at the time. I remember that I had a new dress specially made in anticipation. But, alas! the invitation never came, and it was a woeful girl who went to bed that night.

The year I first played Trilby—1895—was a most momentous one for me, for in that year I also became engaged—a most fatiguing process—and spent the hours between rehearsals and performances selecting my trousseau and house-hunting. I do not know that I have much to record of my theatre doings after playing leading lady in a certain ceremony, which resulted in a life-partnership with the afore-mentioned Harry. It is rather curious that the year following my marriage I should have played the part of Evelyn in "The Happy Life," and I was very proud of my association with Sir Henry Irving at the Lyceum in such plays as "The Merchant of Venice," "The Lyons Mail," "The Bells," and "Louis XI." My tours with my husband began in 1906 and continued for about six years, when I was advised to give up stage work on account of my health, my last appearance being at Sydney, as Ophelia, on April 10th. 1912.

Although, however, I found that my constitution was not equal to the strain of theatrical life, I should not hesitate to let my daughter Elizabeth go on the stage if she wanted to do so. To my mind it offers better opportunities for success than many other occupations open to girls nowadays. When I gave up acting I quickly found that there were other fields of work which attracted me. I should have loved to have been a hospital nurse, for the work appeared to me so very interesting; and I have always seemed to have had an ambition to be a very good cook. I remember when I was a little girl of six hearing my father say, "How is it I can't get a chop cooked decently except at the club?" I determined that when I grew up my husband should never be able to complain that I could not cook a chop. And although I have been married nineteen years he never has.

When I want a real day's holiday I spend it cooking for my mothers and babies at St. Pancras. I could tell you some delightful stories of babies at a certain nursery in St. Pancras, belonging to a certain institution—every one the darling of a mother whose only chance of earning a few shillings is to leave her baby for a few hours at the *crèche*. Oh, if only someone could afford to build model dwellings whose motto might be, "Large babies and small profits!"

There is so much work to be done by women at the present time. I could tell you of the social work waiting for women in all sorts of directions, and I do feel that we shall never be able to help the women of our generation to lead a fuller, happier, and more complete existence unless more women come forward as voters and candidates at municipal elections and interest themselves more in local government and questions relating to the State. We want both men and women in public work.

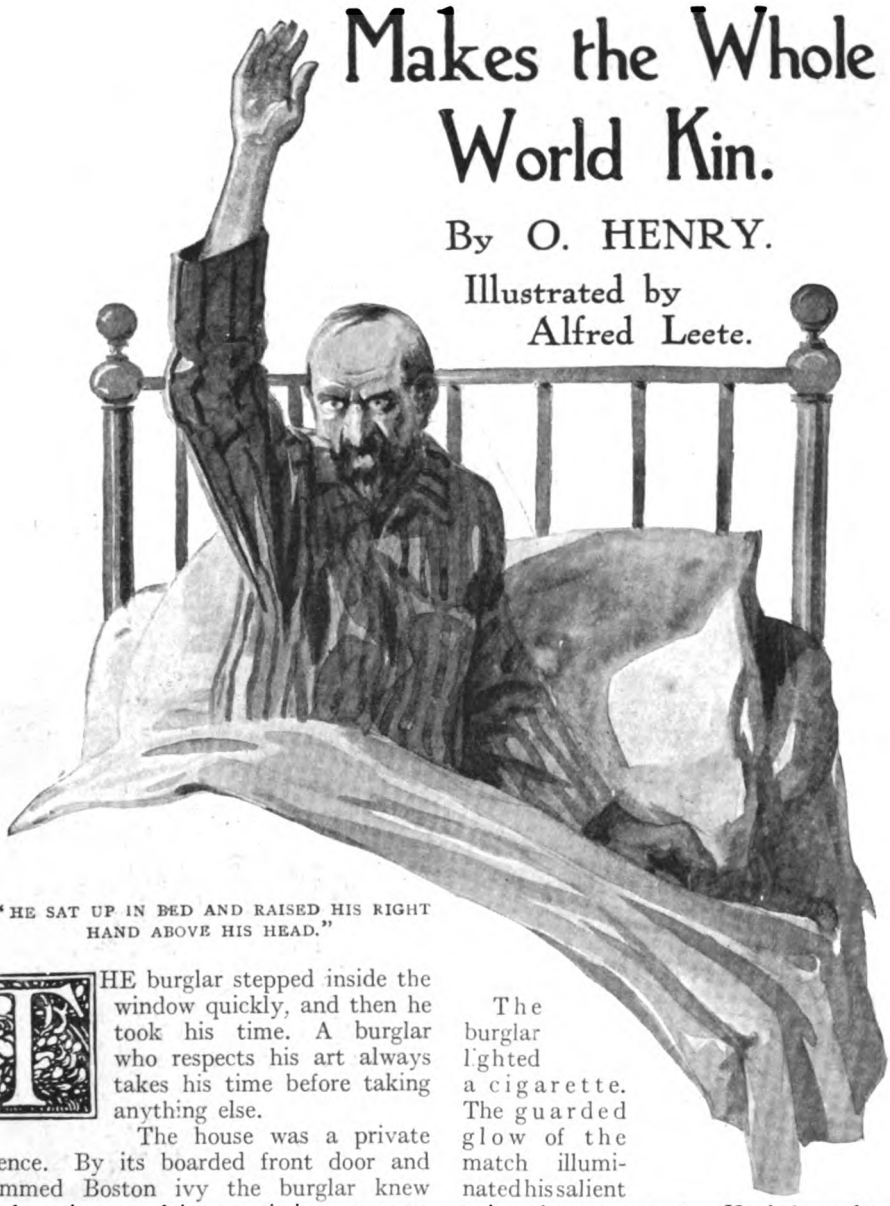
It is extraordinary, when travelling about the country, to find some places where there is not a single woman on the Board of Guardians. I often wonder how such wards manage to do their work. Once I heard of some male Guard ans who went round the infirmary and were asked what sort of food and bottles the babies should have, and how their clothes were to be made. That is a terrible thing to ask a man, even in his own house, let alone in his public capacity.

There is so much in life that is engrossing that I do not find time hanging heavy on my hands, even although I have no longer a profession. I am as interested in my husband and his theatre affairs as I am in my social work, and I help him as much as I can in his productions, although I shall never appear again with him as one of the cast.

Makes the Whole World Kin.

By O. HENRY.

Illustrated by Alfred Leete.



"HE SAT UP IN BED AND RAISED HIS RIGHT HAND ABOVE HIS HEAD."

THE burglar stepped inside the window quickly, and then he took his time. A burglar who respects his art always takes his time before taking anything else.

The house was a private residence. By its boarded front door and untrimmed Boston ivy the burglar knew that the mistress of it was sitting on some ocean-side piazza telling a sympathetic man in a yachting cap that no one had ever understood her sensitive, lonely heart. He knew by the light in the third-storey front windows and by the lateness of the season that the master of the house had come home, and would soon extinguish his light and retire. For it was September of the year and of the soul, in which season the house's good man comes to consider roof-gardens and stenographers as vanities, and to desire the return of his mate and the more durable blessings of decorum and the moral excellences.

The burglar lighted a cigarette. The guarded glow of the match illuminated his salient points for a moment. He belonged to the third type of burglars.

This third type has not yet been recognized and accepted. The police have made us familiar with the first and second. Their classification is simple. The collar is the distinguishing mark.

When a burglar is caught who does not wear a collar he is described as a degenerate of the lowest type, singularly vicious and depraved, and is suspected of being the desperate criminal who stole the handcuffs out of Patrolman Hennessy's pocket in 1878 and walked away to escape arrest.

The other well-known type is the burglar who wears a collar. He is always referred to as a Raffles in real life. He is invariably a gentleman by daylight, breakfasting in a dress suit, and posing as a paperhanger, while after dark he plies his nefarious occupation of burglary. His mother is an extremely wealthy and respected resident of Ocean Grove, and when he is conducted to his cell he asks at once for a nail-file and the *Police Gazette*. He always has a wife in every State in the Union, and *fiancées* in all the Territories, and the newspapers print his matrimonial gallery out of their stock of cuts of the ladies who were cured by only one bottle after having been given up by five doctors, experiencing great relief after the first dose.

The burglar wore a blue sweater. He was neither a Raffles nor one of the *chefs* from "Hell's Kitchen." The police would have been baffled had they attempted to classify him. They have not yet heard of the respectable, unassuming burglar who is neither above nor below his station.

This burglar of the third class began to prowl. He wore no masks, dark-lanterns, or indiarubber shoes. He carried a revolver in his pocket, and he chewed peppermint gum thoughtfully.

The furniture of the house was swathed in its summer dust-protectors. The silver was far away in safe-deposit vaults. The burglar expected no remarkable "haul." His objective point was that dimly-lighted room where the master of the house should be sleeping heavily after whatever solace he had sought to lighten the burden of his loneliness. A "touch" might be made there to the extent of legitimate, fair professional profits—loose money, a watch, a jewelled tie-pin—nothing exorbitant or beyond reason. He had seen the window left open and had taken the chance.

The burglar softly opened the door of the lighted room. The gas was turned low. A man lay in the bed asleep. On the dressing-table lay many things in confusion—a crumpled roll of bills, a watch, keys, three poker chips, crushed cigars, a pink silk hair bow, and an unopened bottle of bromo-seltzer for a bulwark in the morning.

The burgla[illegible]ook three steps towards the

"TELL YOU WHAT—I DON'T BELIEVE THE

dressing-table. The man in the bed suddenly uttered a squeaky groan and opened his eyes. His right hand slid under his pillow, but remained there.

"Lie still," said the burglar, in conversational tone. Burglars of the third type do not hiss. The citizen in the bed looked at the round end of the burglar's pistol, and lay still.

"Now hold up both your hands," commanded the burglar.

The citizen had a little pointed brown-and-grey beard like that of a painless dentist. He looked solid, esteemed irritable, and disgusted. He sat up in bed and raised his right hand above his head.

"Up with the other one," ordered the burglar. "You might be amphibious and shoot with your left. You can count two, can't you? Hurry up, now."

"Can't raise the other one," said the citizen, with a contortion of his lineaments.

BLOOMIN' DOCTORS KNOW WHAT IS GOOD FOR IT."

"What's the matter with it?"

"Rheumatism in the shoulder."

"Inflammatory?"

"Was. The inflammation has gone down."

The burglar stood for a moment or two, holding his gun on the afflicted one. He glanced at the plunder on the dressing-table and then, with a half-embarrassed air, back at the man in the bed. Then he, too, made a sudden grimace.

"Don't stand there making faces," snapped the citizen, bad-humouredly. "If you've come to burgle why don't you do it? There's some stuff lying about."

"'Scuse me," said the burglar, with a grin. "It's good for you that rheumatism and me happens to be old pals. I got it in my left arm too. Most anybody but me would have popped you when you wouldn't hoist that left claw of yours."

"How long have you had it?" inquired the citizen.

"Four years. I guess that ain't all. Once you've got it, it's you for a rheumatic life—that's my judgment."

"Ever try rattlesnake oil?" asked the citizen, interested.

"Gallons," said the burglar. "If all the snakes I've used the oil of was strung out in a row they'd reach eight times as far as Saturn, and the rattles could be heard at Valparaiso, Indiana, and back."

"Some use Chiselum's Pills," remarked the citizen.

"Fudge!" said the burglar. "Took 'em five months. No good. I had some relief the year I tried Finkelham's Extract, Balm of Gilead poultices, and Potts's Pain Pulverizer; but I think it was the buckeye I carried in my pocket what done the trick."

"Is yours worse in the morning or at night?" asked the citizen.

"Night," said the burglar; "just when I'm busiest. But, take down that arm of yours. Say, did you ever try Blickerstaff's Blood Builder?"

"I never did. Does yours come in paroxysms or is it a steady pain?"

The burglar sat down on the foot of the bed and rested his revolver on his crossed knee.

"It jumps," said he. "It strikes me when I ain't looking for it. I had to give up second-storey work because I got stuck sometimes half-way up. Tell you what—I don't believe the bloomin' doctors know what is good for it."

"Same here. I've spent a thousand dollars without getting any relief. Yours swell any?"

"Of mornings. And when it's goin' to rain—great Christopher!"

"Me, too," said the citizen. "I can tell when a streak of humidity the size of a table-cloth starts from Florida on its way to New York. And if I pass a theatre where there's an 'East Lynne' *matinée* going on, the moisture starts my left arm jumping like a toothache."

"It's undiluted Hades!" said the burglar.

"You're dead right," said the citizen.

The burglar looked down at his pistol and thrust it into his pocket with an awkward attempt at ease.

"Say, old man," he said, constrainedly, "ever try opodeldoc?"

"Slop!" said the citizen, angrily. "Might as well rub on restaurant butter."

"Sure," concurred the burglar. "It's a salve suitable for little Minnie when the kitty scratches her finger. I'll tell you what! We're up against it. I only find one thing that eases her up. Hey? Little old sanitary, ameliorating, lest-we-forget Booze. Say—this job's off—'scuse me—get on your clothes and let's go out and have some. 'Scuse the liberty, but ouch! There she goes again!"

"'FORGOT MY MONEY' HE EXPLAINED."

"For a week," said the citizen "I haven't been able to dress myself without help. I'm afraid Thomas is in bed, and——"

"Climb out," said the burglar; "I'll help you get into your duds. I knew a man who said Omberry's Ointment fixed him in two weeks so that he could use both hands in fastening his tie."

As they were going out the door the citizen turned and started back.

"Forgot my money," he explained; "laid it on the dressing-table last night."

The burglar caught him by the right sleeve.

"Come on," he said, bluffly. "I ask you. Leave it alone. I've got the price. Ever try witch-hazel and oil of wintergreen?"

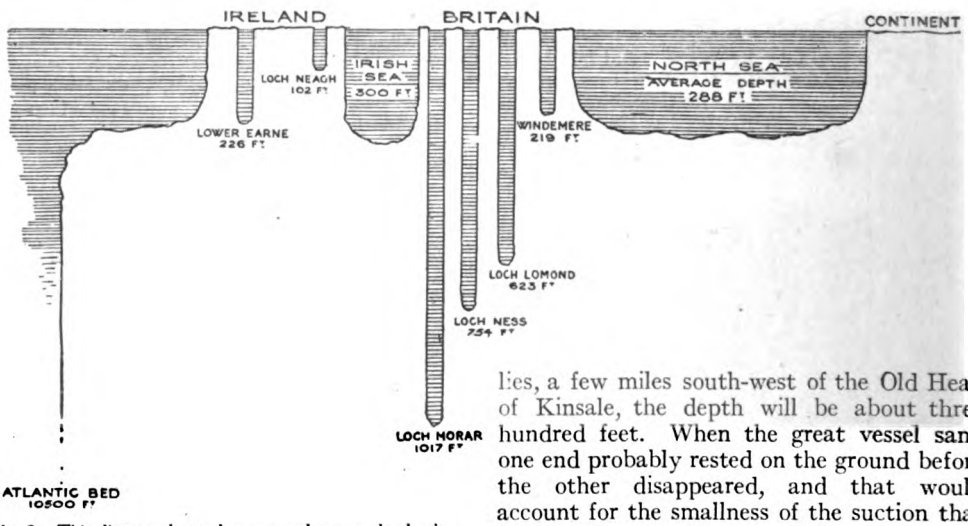
The Depths of Our Lakes and Seas.

LOCHS DEEPER THAN SEAS.

By E. LLOYD MORRIS.

No. 1.—If St. Paul's Cathedral and the Monument were placed in the southern half of the North Sea or in the Straits of Dover they would appear as shown above.

THE traveller who has sailed from Hamburg to Hull, Dublin to Liverpool, or from Cherbourg to Plymouth, and later finds himself paddling in a canoe on the unruffled surface of a Highland loch seldom realizes that he may have below him a far greater depth of water than when he traversed the North Sea, Irish Sea, or the English Channel. When we look at a map of the British Isles and note the seventy miles between Wales and Ireland, the hundred miles from Devonshire to Brittany, and the four hundred miles that separate England from Germany, it seems hardly credible that the narrow slits or oblongs representing Loch Lomond, Loch Tay, Loch Ness, and Loch Morar are all more than twice the depth of the wide, outlying seas.



No. 2.—This diagram shows the contrast between the depths of our lakes and seas.

It should be understood that Great Britain and Ireland stand upon the continental shelf which extends westward of Ireland a sufficient distance to afford standing room for another Ireland. Then there is a sudden and immense drop to the bed of the Atlantic lying ten thousand five hundred feet below the level of the sea. Though the surfaces of the Scottish lochs are, of course, higher than the sea-level, yet the bottoms of many of them are far lower than those of the surrounding seas. The diagram above will show the contrast between our British lake and sea depths (No. 2).

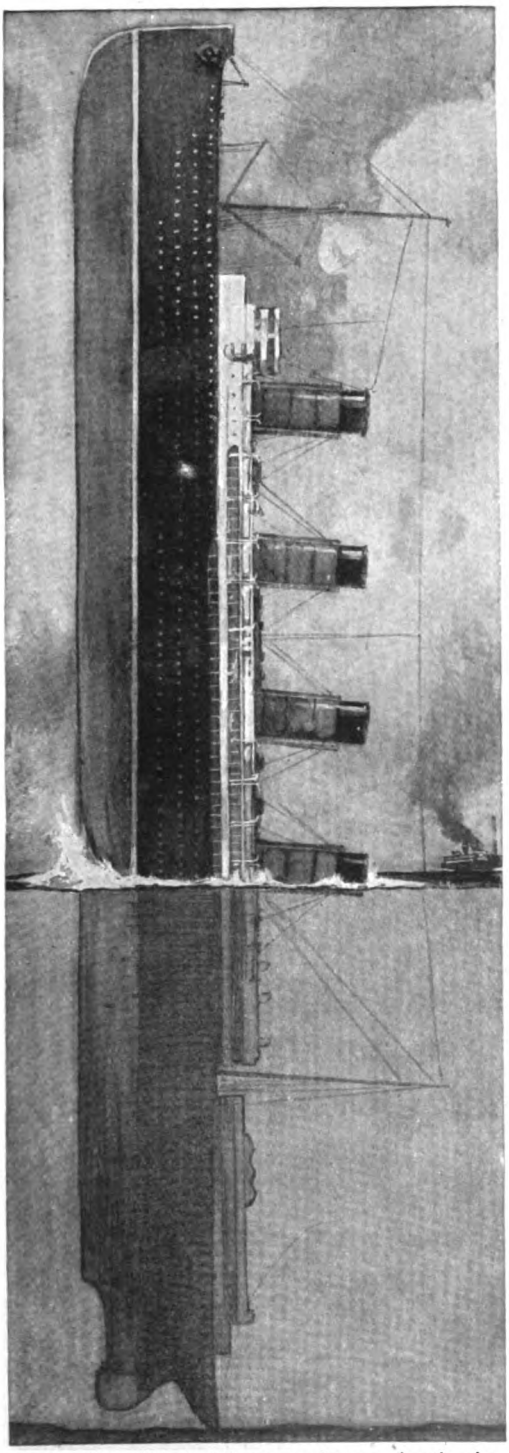
The shallowness of the shelf on which the British Isles rest and the depths of the dents or depressions inside them may be more easily understood and more vividly appreciated if we use well-known public buildings for our measuring-rods.

Let us suppose that St. Paul's Cathedral were placed in the southern half of the North Sea or in the Straits of Dover. The depth is about one hundred and eighty feet. As the cathedral is four hundred and four feet high, more than half of it would be visible (No. 1). If the London Monument were erected in the same area the top of the torch would be twenty-three feet above the water.

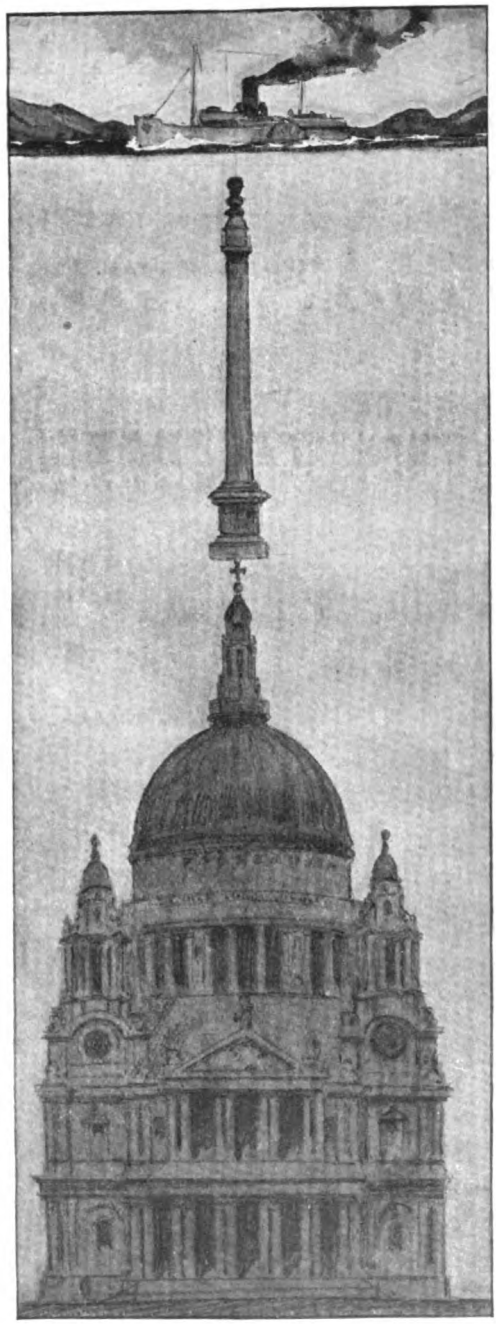
The average depth of the North Sea is two hundred and eighty-eight feet. Towards the north it deepens considerably. The deepest part of the Irish Sea is about three hundred feet. The English Channel south of Plymouth has a depth of two hundred and sixty-four feet. Where the *Lusitania* lies, a few miles south-west of the Old Head of Kinsale, the depth will be about three hundred feet. When the great vessel sank one end probably rested on the ground before the other disappeared, and that would account for the smallness of the suction that followed her engulfment. If the vessel were standing on end at the place where she now lies nearly two-thirds of her would be sticking out of the water (No. 3).

Remembering that the sea-depths about Great Britain range from one hundred and eighty feet to three hundred feet (with the exception of one or two holes off the West of Scotland), let us betake ourselves to the "bonnie banks" of one of the most beautiful of the Scottish lochs. Loch Lomond owes much of its fame to the adventures of Rob Roy and Bailie Nicol Jarvie, but it has another interest often unsuspected by the passing tourist, and that is its great depth. Just at the foot of lofty Ben Lomond, where the loch is less than a mile wide, the depth is no less than six hundred and twenty-three feet. As the loch is no more than twenty-three feet above the level of the sea, its deepest part must be twice as low in the earth's crust as the lowest part of the adjacent seas. If St. Paul's Cathedral were at the bottom of Loch Lomond it would be entirely out of sight. If the London Monument or the Edinburgh Scott Monument stood on top of the golden cross there would be at least seventeen feet of water overhead, which would allow ample room for the keels of the pretty loch steamers (No. 4).

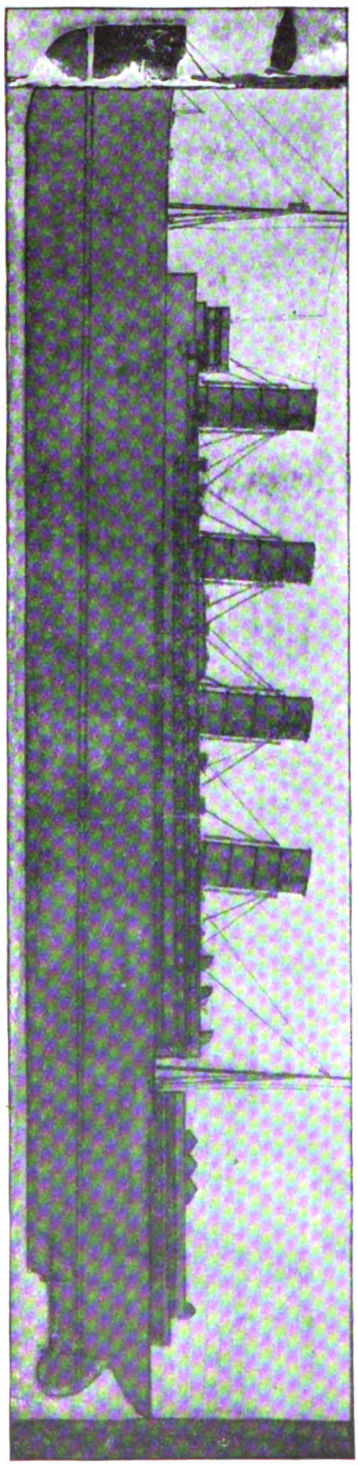
If the ill-fated *Lusitania* had been set on end in its deepest part she would have shown nearly one-fourth of her length above the water, as that gigantic vessel was eight hundred feet long. If she had been planted perpendicularly in Loch Ness, where the depth is greater by one hundred and thirty feet, the leviathan would have been able to show her nose, and no more (No. 5).



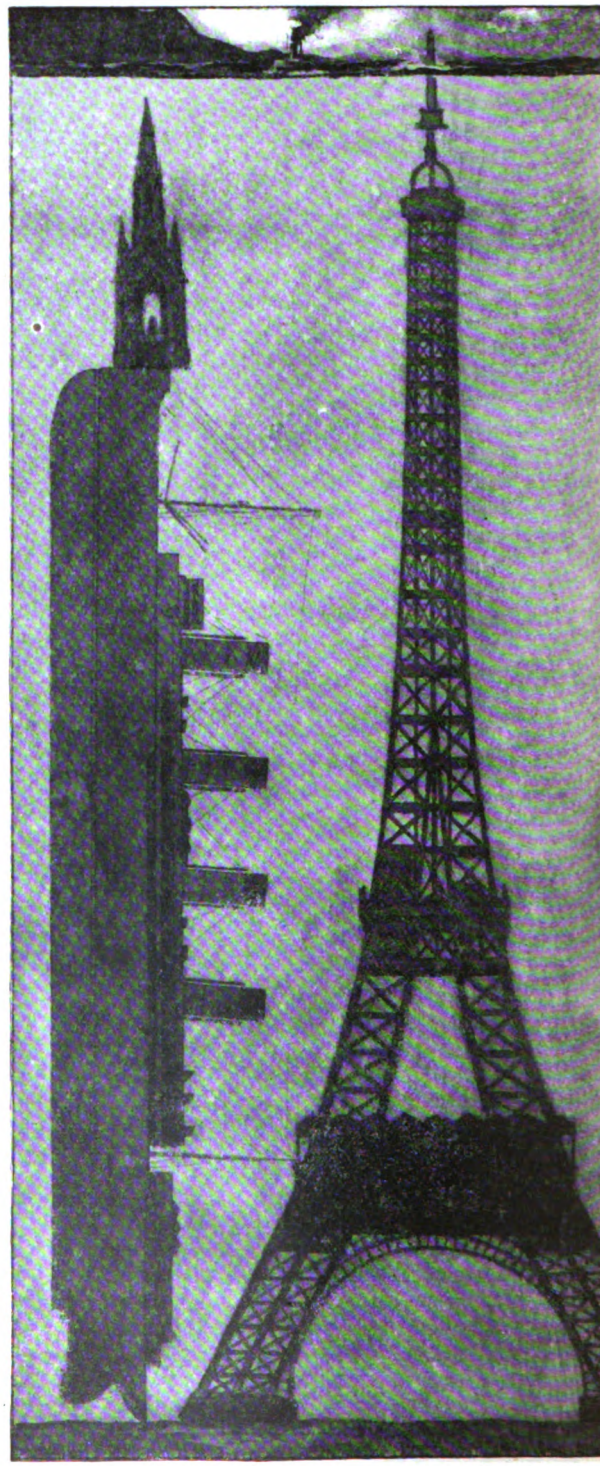
No. 3 — If the "Lusitania" were standing on end at the place where she now lies nearly two-thirds of her would be sticking out of the water.



No. 4. — Compare this with the picture that appears at the head of this article, which shows that the North Sea or the Straits of Dover would only submerge half St. Paul's Cathedral and would fail to cover the Monument. The above illustration shows the astonishing fact that Loch Lomond is so deep that the London Monument might be placed on top of St. Paul's without the surface being reached.



No. 5.—If the "Lusitania" were planted perpendicularly in Loch Ness only her bows would be visible.



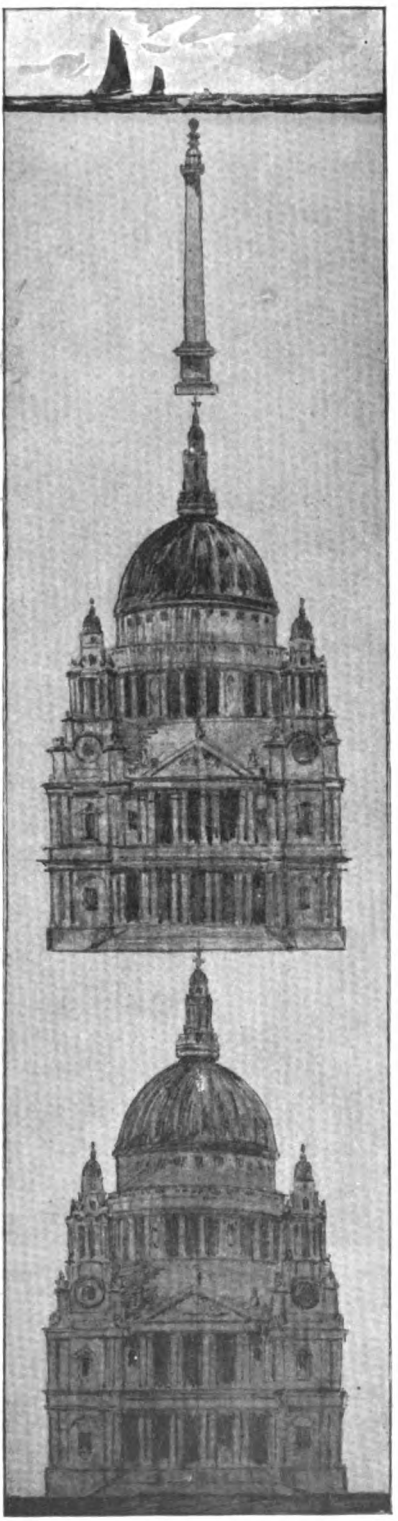
No. 6.—So deep is Loch Morar that even the Scott Monument placed on the "Lusitania" would not reach the surface, while if Cleopatra's Needle stood on the Eiffel Tower only half the former would be seen.

For a long time Loch Ness had the reputation of being the deepest of the Scottish lochs, but in 1879 Mr. J. Y. Buchanan, F.R.S., showed that Loch Morar was deeper by several hundred feet than Loch Ness. If we could fix the *Lusitania* erect in the depths of Loch Morar we should lose sight of her altogether. Even if the Scott Monument (two hundred feet) could be stuck above her bow, the lightning-rod of the monument would not fret the surface of that abysmal loch (No. 6).

The soundings of Loch Morar reveal a depth of one thousand and seventeen feet, which is almost exactly the same as that of Lake Geneva, but the bottom of Lake Geneva is higher than the surface of Loch Morar.

The Eiffel Tower itself would be completely submerged in this highland loch, and if Cleopatra's Needle (seventy feet) stood on it half of it would be out of sight (No. 6).

Let anyone stand in St. Paul's churchyard and let his eye travel up the steps, columns, dome, and ball to the golden cross. Then let him imagine another St. Paul's above that again: steps, columns, dome, ball, and cross. On top of that again let him, in imagination, set the London Monument. Then let him suppose himself standing at the bottom of Loch Morar looking up for the fisherman's boat floating above it all. If he were in the boat, leaning over the gunwale, peering below the surface, he would probably discover the top of the Monument nine feet below (No. 7).



No. 7.—St. Paul's Cathedral might be placed on top of itself, and both surmounted by the London Monument, without reaching the surface of Loch Morar.

Take the largest of the Pyramids—that of Cheops, four hundred and sixty feet in height. Set St. Paul's on top of it, and to complete the pile borrow the dome of the British Museum (one hundred and sixty feet). The whole of the dome would be washed by the waters of Loch Morar on a stormy day, as the highest part would be only seven feet above the level in a calm.

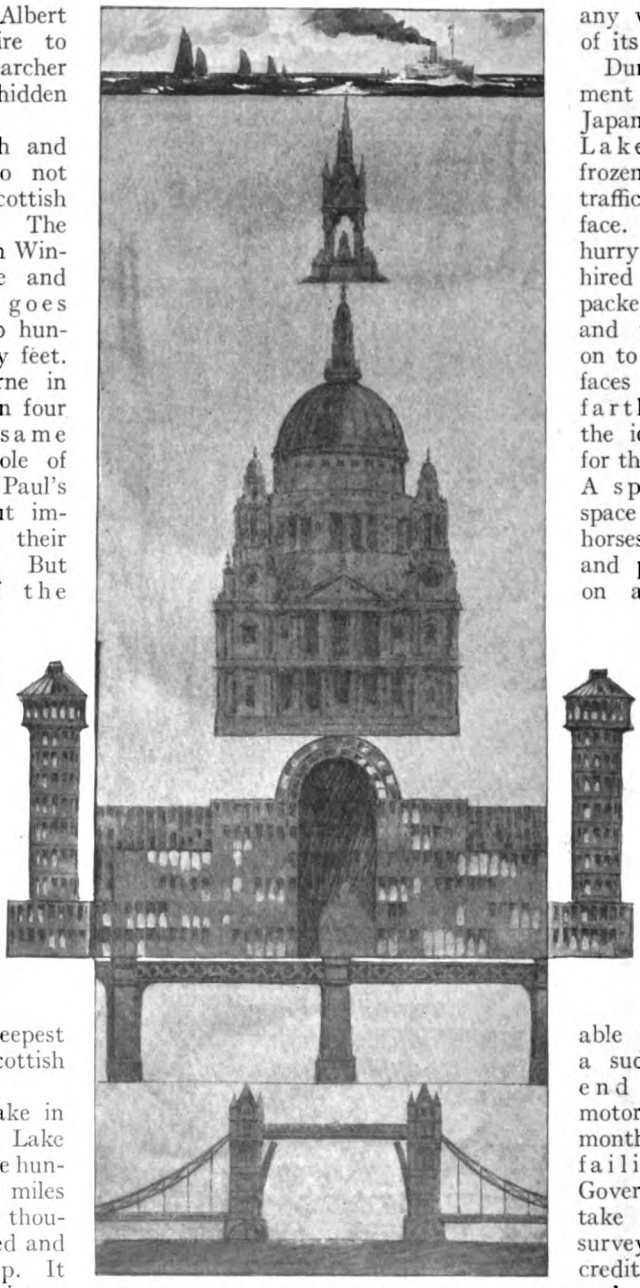
If the Forth Bridge (three hundred and seventy feet) supported St. Paul's, and it again supported Cleopatra's Needle (seventy feet), and Nelson's Monument were balanced on the point of the Needle, then we should be able to admire the fine statue of the admiral (eighteen feet) standing on a pedestal four feet above the surface of the loch.

Set the Newcastle High Bridge one hundred and twelve feet) on the London Tower Bridge (one hundred and thirty-nine feet). Let the Crystal Palace (one hundred and ninety-four feet) supply the next storey, and St. Paul's (four hundred and four feet) the fourth. Finally, let the Prince Albert Memorial (one hundred and seventy feet) crown the whole. This tremendous pile of famous buildings would be easily pocketed in Loch Morar, leaving only

two feet of the Albert Memorial spire to indicate to the searcher where they were hidden (No. 8).

The English and Welsh lakes do not approach the Scottish lochs in depth. The plummet in both Windermere Lake and Llyn Cowlyd goes down about two hundred and twenty feet. The Lower Erne in Ireland is within four feet of the same depth. The whole of the dome of St. Paul's would stand out impressively from their watery expanse. But the dome of the British Museum (one hundred and sixty feet) would not be discernible in their liquid depths. Neither, is it likely, would the Crystal Palace (one hundred and ninety-four feet). Wastwater is deeper than Windermere by forty feet, and is the deepest of the non-Scottish lakes.

The deepest lake in the world is Lake Baikal. It is three hundred and thirty miles long and five thousand four hundred and thirteen feet deep. It is more than twice as deep as Lake Nyassa, which is the next in depth. A pagoda of thirteen St. Paul's Cathedrals could be steeped in that amazing bath and not give any visible indication of its existence.



No. 8.—Five famous buildings—the Tower Bridge, the Newcastle High Bridge, the Crystal Palace, St. Paul's, and the Albert Memorial—if placed one above the other, would only just emerge above the surface of Loch Morar.

During the excitement of the Russo-Japanese War, when Lake Baikal was frozen there was much traffic over its surface. In the panic to hurry over, a family hired a sledge and packed themselves and their belongings on to it and set their faces towards the farther shore. But the ice was too thin for the load. A crack! A split! A black space showed where horses, sledge, packs, and people had gone on a long, long journey downwards through the icy waters in earth's biggest hole.

In conclusion, it is fitting to pay tribute to the memory of Sir John Murray, the pioneer of British lake measurements. His laborious and honourable career came to a sudden and tragic end owing to a motor accident a few months ago. After failing to get the Government to undertake bathymetric surveys, it is to his credit that he undertook the responsibility himself, with the result that the world of geographical and geological science is his great debtor to-day.

WINGS FOR A DAY

By Sydney Preston

Illustrated by WALTER·J·ENRIGHT

IF ever there was a distracting man to talk with when he wanted to avoid giving a straight answer, it was old Barney Mulloy; and if ever a lad had good reason to demand one, it was Terence O'Byrne. Now, Barney was a widower with only one daughter, and when young Terence came courting her, the course of true love ran smoothly until he spoke of the wedding, and then it ran into a bog. Barney would discourse by the hour on the state of the crops and the country or of love and marriage in general, but whenever Terence broached the subject of most importance to him, he would answer neither one thing nor the other, and the most that Terence could get him to say was, "L'ave it be for a bit."

"Lôok at Jacob," argued Barney, one day when Terence pressed for an answer. "Seven years did he wait, and never a whisht out of him."

"I've looked at him many a time hung up in me Aunt McGivern's parlour," replied Terence, with warmth. "He's a hook-nosed culd spalpeen tendin' sheep, with a beard like a billy-goat and a gown like a bedspread—a hundred and fifty, if a day, when the pictur' was took. What's seven years to a man that counts them by hundreds, would you tell me?"

"He's hung in your Aunt McGivern's parlour, is he?" asked Barney, with sudden interest. "I don't mind his pictur', but, then, never a foot have I set in her house since poor Tim—God rest his sowl!—was laid in his grave. 'Tis grievin' she is for him yet?" he added, in a casual way.

"Grievin', indeed!" smiled Terence, a thought creeping into his mind. "'Tis herself that's fair distracted with men."

"*Men!*" exclaimed Barney. "And it's not yet a year since Tim died!"

"With hired men, I mean," explained Terence, eyeing h'm keenly. "'Twas but yesterday she said to me that a farm is no place for a widdy to run."

"I'm one with her there," responded Barney, a queer, dreaming look coming into his eyes. "Terence," he asked, lowering his voice, "would you think by this time she'd begin to take notice?"

"Notice enough," replied Terence, with an innocent smile; "there's nothin' escapes her. 'All men are liars,' she says to me, 'and the rest of them fools.'"

"Tare an' ages!" ejaculated Barney, crestfallen.

"Hired men, I take ut," explained Terence; "for at the time she said it she was after l'avin' the churn to drive cows out of the garden. 'I do be vexed,' says she to me 'by a thousand and one things a day that a man could look after.'"

Without saying more Terence hurried away, a plan to gain his own ends leaping into his mind. The next morning he rose early, dressed himself in his best, drove to Rockmore, bought a licence to marry Norah Mulloy, and an hour later stepped out at the gate of the Widow McGivern's farm-house with his heart thumping excitedly under the document in his breast-pocket. Presently he was chatting sociably with his aunt in her parlour, listening with an appearance

of sympathetic concern as she poured forth a tale of her petty trials.

"Ochone!" she ejaculated at length with a sigh, "'tis terrible hard to be a widdy."

"I've no doubt it is," returned Terence, with a shake of his head. "And isn't it quare to think there'd never be widdies or widdiers if there never was weddin's?"

"Sure, nayther there would," she reflected, looking surprised.

"And stranger," went on Terence, reflectively, "that the remedy in each case is the same as the cause."

"Why, how can that be, would you tell me?" she inquired.

"Faix, don't you see?" replied Terence, with guileless, wide-open eyes. "Me wife couldn't be a widdy if I wasn't her man, and I couldn't be a widdier if she wasn't me wife. Likewise, if me wife was a widdy, and meself was a widdier, and each of us took another, 'twould illustrate me contention."

"Did annyone ever!" exclaimed the Widow McGivern, shaking with laughter. "Terence, you're takin' l'ave of your senses! Don't you see that yez *both* would be dead?"

Terence's jaw dropped; he stared at the picture of Jacob with a puzzled frown, and rubbed his chin thoughtfully.

"Bedad, you're right!" he shouted, at length. "Of course we'd be dead, sure enough. But hould on for a minute," he added, his face lighting up. "I have it. 'Twas a poor illustration, and here's a better one. Barney Mulloy is a widdier—d'you see that, now?"

"I do," she assented, her eyes twinkling with mirth. "'Tis aisy enough, Terence, if you don't marry him after he's dead."

"Barney's a widdier," repeated Terence, solemnly, "as I know to me sorrow, for that's why he's houldin' back on Norah and me, and her too tender-hearted to l'ave him, the darlin'! Barney's a widdier, and you," he added, with a pitying break in his voice—"you are a widdy."

"That I am," she sighed, "and it's me that knows it. Poor Tim!"

"That bein' the case," continued Terence, rolling his eyes uneasily, "you'd nayther of you be one or the other if both of yez—I mean, each of yez wouldn't be both—merciful Hivens! what do I mean, annyway?"

"Whatever you mean," snapped his aunt, her face growing redder, "you'd better mean somethin' different, I'd have you to know. It's my opinion, Terence," she added, "you've been takin' a drop."

"Divil the one this month back; but me wits is wool-gatherin', there's no doubt at all. Betwixt one thing and another, and what Barney Mulloy let out to me yesterday, I'm fair bewildered."

"What's that?" she queried, expectantly.

Terence lowered his voice.

"He's in love," he replied.

"He's never! And who would she be?"

"Whisht! I mustn't let out her name. But he tould me himself that me and Norah could marry to-morrow if——"

"If what?" she demanded, giving him a nudge.

"You'd be vexed if I tould you."

"More like if you didn't. Go on, Terence dear."

"Me and Norah could marry to-morrow if the one Barney wants would have him."

"Hivens above! Who would she be?"

"She's a widdy, I'll tell you that much," said Terence, with a smile and a wink.

"A widdy," she cried, looking flustered, "and me none the wiser. Why, lad, you've drove all the way from Rockmore, and I never bid you step into the kitchen for a cup of tay and a herrin'. Come, now, and draw up; the pot's on the fire, and 'tis yourself that looks a bit fagged."

"'Tis no wonder," said Terence, as he seated himself at the table, "for with what's on me mind, I could nayther slape last night nor eat this mornin'. There's a dale before me this day."

"And the first thing is to tell me the name of the widdy."

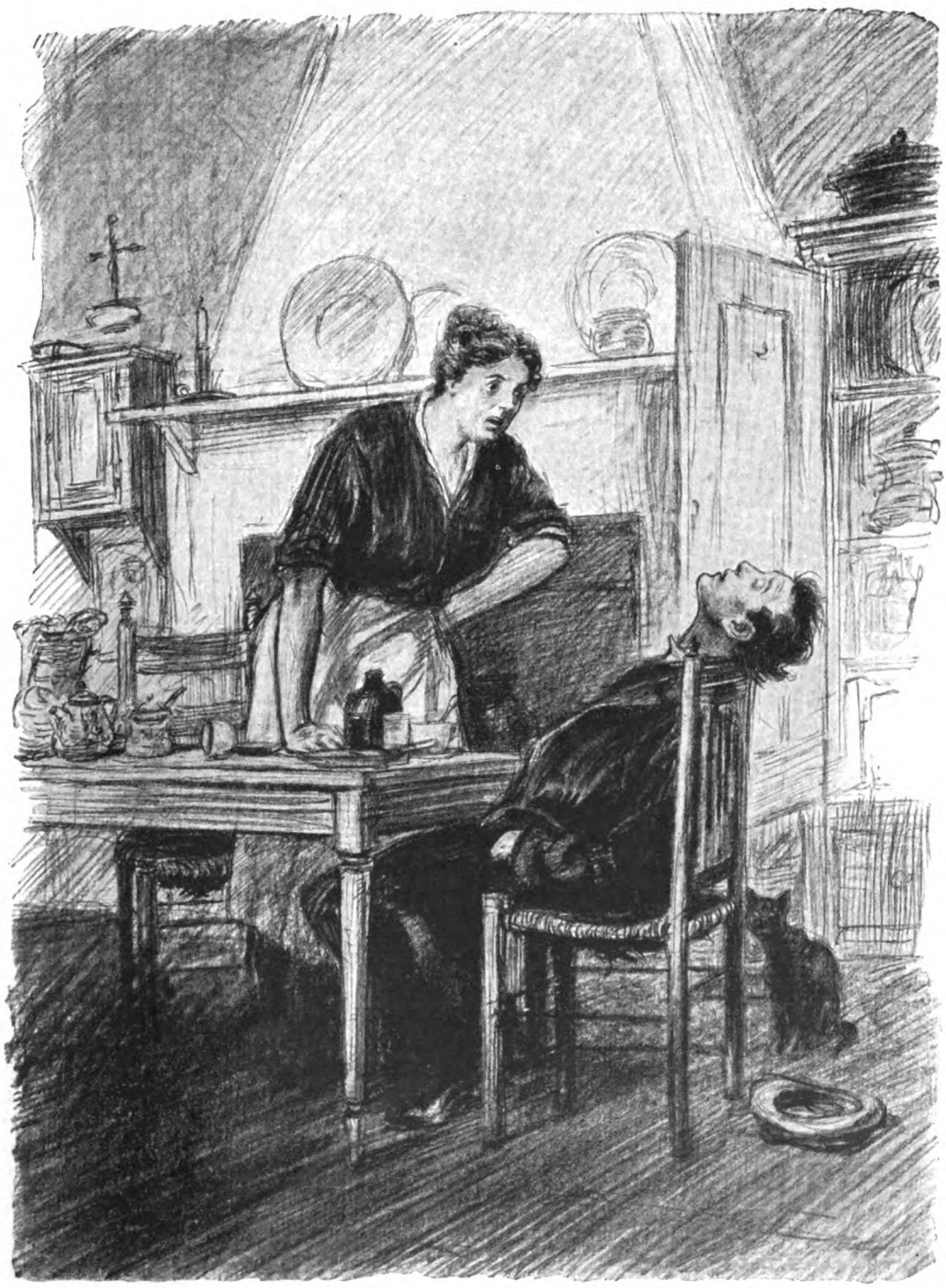
"Then you must never let on that I tould," said Terence, between two bites of a herring. "'Tis yourself, and no other."

"Glory be to the saints!" she cried, trying not to look flattered, "if ever I heard of the likes! Sure, Terence, Barney Mulloy never gave me as much as a word or a look of the kind."

"I know it," replied Terence, "for he tould me as much. All the same, he's distracted with love, and the r'ason he locks it up in his breast is as plain as the eyes of a 'tatie that hasn't got sprouted. It's a dilicate matter to mention, and I've tould more than I meant, so it's meself had better be goin'."

"Not a step will you take from this house without tellin' the rest," she declared, whisking a little brown jug out of the cupboard and placing it on the table. "A little drop of the crathur' to top off with?" she coaxed him. "'Twas your poor Uncle Tim's."

"God rest his sowl!" said Terence, smack-



"'REDAD!' HE WENT ON, CLOSING HIS EYES, WITH HIS HEAD THROWN BACK, 'A DAY UP THERE IS THE SAME AS A YEAR, AND I'M TOOK WITH A VISION THIS MINUTE.'"

ing his lips. "'Twas himself that knew the rale stuff."

"That he did," she returned, beaming with pride, "and him never the worse in his legs. And if his tongue got a small trifle loose, 'twas always the pleasantest kind of discoorse."

Terence set the little jug down on the

table, leaned back in his chair, and regarded it with smiling intentness. "'Tis a quare fancy," he said, musingly, "that just popped into me mind. Uncle Tim, I mind, had ever an eye for a skirt. I'm wonderin'," he debated, half closing his eyes, with his head on one side, "if, where he is, he's a widdier still."

The Widow McGivern tipped over her cup with a splash. "Saints above!" she ejaculated, "you may well call it a quare fancy to spake of a corpse as a widdier."

"It's plain to me mind," said Terence, slipping lower in the chair and raising his voice, "that if a man's wife is his widdy, her man's her widdier, body and sowl. And if Uncle Tim has the luck to rache Hiven to-day, by to-morrow, ten to one, he'll be makin' up to the best-lookin' angel around him. Bedad!" he went on, closing his eyes, with his head thrown back, "a day up there is the same as a year, and I'm took with a vision this minute. I can see him as plain as the jug on the table, the rogue! He's lookin' right now at a young one that looks as if she spent seven days of the week in preenin' her feathers."

The Widow McGivern grabbed the brown jug and slammed it into the cupboard. "I'll tache you," she cried, wrathfully. "The likes of a lad like you to have visions! Take *that!*" And she smote him a hearty slap on the ear.

Terence opened his eyes and sat up with a jerk, staring about the room in bewilderment. "Where am I?" he asked, staring harder and rubbing his eyes. "Is that me own Aunt McGivern? Sure, I seem to be wakin' out of a slape or a trance; but now I mind you axed me to have a cup of tay. That I will, and with pleasure."

"Musha!" cried his aunt, "the drink's gone to his head!"

"Drink!" echoed Terence, leaping out of his chair. "Where is it? I see none."

"Heaven help us, his mind's breakin' loose! Of course you don't see it, Terence dear, but try to remember. Look at them herrin' bones. Don't you mind pickin' *them?*"

Terence scanned the plate she held out. "I'd never take me oath that I did," he replied, with a dubious frown, "nor yet that I didn't, not bein' one to treasure up relics. If you say them was mine, I'll belave you, and if you say they wasn't, I'll do the same, provided you don't tell me both at wanst. But 'tis the first time I ever was presented with the bones of a herrin'. Belike," he added, "you could spare the l'aves of the tay-pot as well."

The Widow McGivern could no longer hold back her laughter, and presently Terence was repeating his breakfast of herring and tea, while she pledged herself never to reveal anything he might deign to tell her about Barney Mulloy.

"It's this way," said Terence, giving in: "he's distracted with love, but there's a dilicate question houldin' him back from sp'akin' his mind. Do what he will, it's beyond him to remember if 'twas the week before Uncle Tim was took off, or the week after, that he kilt the black sow. Not a word now, or I'll drop the end of the thread, and it's a dale aisier to lose than to hould. If he knowed the black sow was kilt the week after Uncle Tim, his mind would be aisy; but if 'twas the week before, then he's a sinner; for 'twas while he was dressin' black Bridget it come on him strong that he loved you. Indade, his mind went into a kind of a trance while he scraped off the bristles, and what he saw was himself on his knees axin' you to have him, then both of yez standin' up for the weddin', him and you startin' off honeymoonin' in iligant style, him in his best and yourself resplindent in silks and satins. What troubled him after was the fear that love struck him when you was a wife instead of a widdy. 'Terence,' says he to me only yesterday, 'I'm houldin' on to meself till a year from the day Tim was laid in the grave; then,' says he, 'I'll be free to ax her the question.'"

The Widow McGivern's eyes opened wide, but her mouth opened wider. "Never have I heard a tale to bate that!" she exclaimed. "For Barney's a dale more sensible in his talk than yourself. Is it the truth you're after tellin', Terence?" she demanded, suspiciously.

"That it isn't," he replied, airily. "There's a word here and there, belike, to be bettered, for me memory's poor, and 'tis hard to grasp hould of such a dilicate point; but if it was me, divil the bit would I care when Bridget was kilt."

"You wouldn't?"

"That I wouldn't," declared Terence, with a glance at the cupboard. "No more than takin' a drop of the crathur to top off the herrin."

"Troth, then," said she, with a toss of her head, "that's out of the question, for there's not as much as a drop within rache."

"Tare an' ages!" ejaculated Terence,

astounded. "I'll take me oath that the little brown jug——"

"*What* little brown jug?"

"Uncle Tim's. Don't you mind——"

"I remember a trance," she said, sharply, and for as much as a minute Terence was dumb.

"I'll be goin'," he remarked, pushing back his chair; then he drew from his pocket the document he bought in Rockmore and passed it over to his aunt.

"The licence to wed!" she exclaimed, in amazement. "And when is the weddin'?"

"Hiven knows," responded Terence, "but not me, except for a sign that come to me drivin' down from Rockmore. I was wonderin' what possessed me to buy a licence before the time was fixed, and I said to meself out loud, 'It may be a year,' I says, and all of a suddent the mare give a snort and stood still in her tracks, then she turned her head and eyed me reproachful, and says she, as plain as a person, 'It may be a day.' I was that took aback by the words in her whinny that 'twas full half a minute before I could speak; then I says, 'A day is it, Molly?' And you'd scarcely belave me, but she bobbed her head twice and went on contented."

"Did annyone ever!" laughed the Widow McGivern. "To think of a mare sayin' words!"

"She said them but once, and a horse may be gifted with talk as well as an ass; but whether it's true or not, me mind is made up that not a day longer will I wait for the weddin'. And if you'll have Barney, I'm thinkin' he'll want to be wedded no later than me."

"Hiven help me!" she protested, breathing hard, "but it's terrible suddent!"

"That it is," agreed Terence; "it's sudden whenever it comes, like death and the rint."

"Och, wirra!" she wailed, "last year's bunnit's ould-fashioned, and the new one's all black for poor Tim. Of coorse there's me hat with the green silk trimmin' and the red ostrich feather, but it's a trifle young for me age, don't you think, Terence?"

"Young for your age!" laughed Terence. "Faix, there's few would belave you've turned thirty, and ould Barney——"

"*Ould* Barney, indade!" she clipped in. "I'd have you to know there's a good twinty years ahead of him still."

"Thirty, more like," declared Terence; "for once wedded to you 'tis younger he'll get every day."

"Sure, I feel like a gomeral," she smiled, "to talk about weddin', and him never sayin' so much as a word."

"He'll be after axin' you in less than an hour," Terence asserted, rising, "for I'm off to tell him you'll have him."

"You'll never," she protested, "or I won't. You may say, if you like, that I tould you 'twas the week after Tim died, God bless him! that Bridget was kilt, for well I mind the squealin' I took for a banshee till Pat Keely come by."

"I'll tell him that much, then," said Terence, as he hastened away.

The Widow McGivern's house stands on a hill, two miles by the road from Barney Mulloy's, though straight across country the distance is much shorter; and as Terence speeded his mare down the hill he fervently prayed that his tongue might be as nimble with Barney as with his aunt.

"'Tis inspired that I am," he said to himself, with a chuckle; "and divil a lie am I tellin', but just givin' wings to me fancy. A rale lie, I take it, is mostly set overnight to rise and baked in the oven of sin. I'm a vessel, a mouthpiece, not knowin' one minute what's comin' the next. Annyway, I'll confess and do penance, if need be; but for this day there's nothin' I'll stop at."

But when he got to Barney Mulloy's, it looked as if he'd never begin, for Barney's mind was far from the Widow McGivern. There he stood in the barn-yard, deep in thought beside a pen, while the red-and-white heifer inside leaped and pranced as if to show off her agility. Up she went with a snort, coming down with her four legs spread out like a saw-horse, then stood staring at the two men, awaiting applause.

"Terence," said Barney, "she's got to come out of that pen and into the crate, or I'll be late for the market at Rockmore and be losin' the sale of her. I mind the time when I'd have tucked the likes of her under one arm, but what with her capers and the plum-bagy in the small of me back, I'm thinkin' that four hands 'll be better than two."

"I'll help you, with pleasure," said Terence, rather taken aback, but instantly planning to prevent the trip to Rockmore. "But first I'd have a few words——"

Barney frowned. "I've no time to waste this mornin'," he snapped. "'Twas but yesterday I tould you to l'ave it be for a while, and here you be at it again. Grab hould of the baste, and stop blatherin'."

The words were scarcely spoken when Terence, in a quick flash of temper, leaped into the pen.

"Aisy, now, Terence!" cried Barney, mistrusting the gleam of his eye; but the words were unheeded. "Be *gintle!*" he shouted. "For God's sake be aisy!" But round the pen went Terence, while Barney implored him to stop, with the calf in a frenzy of terror eluding his grasp. At last he jumped out of the pen and stepped up to Barney, his eyes flashing.

"'Be aisy!'" he quoted, wrathfully. "Is it 'gintle' you want me to be? What am I but *aisy* and *gintle?* You bid me grab hould of the baste, and then you kape shoutin' to stop."

"'Twould take the divil himself to tell which of the two of yez was tryin' to grab hould of the other. You mane well enough, Terence, me boy, but you don't allow for the narves of the baste. Whisht now, spake lower, and don't move so suddent, or the both of us won't kape her from runnin' amuck."

"Whatever is that?" inquired Terence, suddenly calm.

"Look at her now!" exclaimed Barney. "Mother of Hiven, I see by the cock of her eye and the lift of her tail there's trouble ahead if we don't use her gintle. But runnin' amuck? Let me see, it's somethin' like this: a notion, we'll say, sazes you to do somethin' to-day you couldn't do yesterday, and wouldn't to-morrow."

"I see," said Terence, thinking hard.

"And when the notion is strong," went on Barney, "it works like a meracle. That calf now, if I m not desaved, once she got started, would le'p over the fences and off like a deer."

"In that case," said Terence, sitting down on the crate, "we'll take every precaution, and l'ave her a bit till she gets over the fright. In the meantime, I've a few words to say."

"You're at it again," sighed Barney, shaking his head. "Terence," he went on, as he settled down and drew out his pipe, "'tis hard to be ould and a widdier."

"STRAIGHT AS THE FLIGHT OF A BEE SHE KEPT ON HER WAY TO THE WIDOW McGIVERN'S"

"And harder," said Terence, breathing hard, "to be a widdy; and worse to be single, with no chance of bein' one or the other."

"Hiven above!" ejaculated Barney, puffing away at his pipe. "What does a lad like you know about widdies?"

"This much," replied Terence, nodding sagely: "a widdy may die for love of a man that doesn't ax her to have him."

"The divil!" cried Barney, amazed.

"But a widdier, now," Terence reflected, "has the remedy right at his elbow as aisy as drinkin' a drop of the crathur'. One taste's good enough, but another is better. 'Tis a poor sort of sowl that's nayther single or double, with a world full of fine-lookin' iligible widdies like me own Aunt McGivern."

Barney took his pipe from his mouth and stared dumbly.

"'Twas a mere illustration," said Terence, with an airy wave of his hand.

"An illustration!" burst forth Barney, at length, and he drew a long breath. "'Tis a peep-show, a panamorry, no less. Would you think now, Terence, me boy, she'd look twice at me?"

"I shouldn't be tellin'," returned Terence, with a shake of his head, "but 'tis yourself she would have."

Barney gasped. "Sure, she never give me as much as a look!"

"'Tis her pride," Terence explained, "and the way of the sex. The harder the best of them love, the less will they show it, when the one they would have passes them by. They're not like us men, God bless 'em!"

"She's an iligant woman," said Barney, his face beaming, "and I never dr'amed she'd look twice at me after Tim McGivern."

"There's no accountin' for the fancies of women, but me aunt was took suddent, that she was."

"Took suddent with what?"

"With love," answered Terence, solemnly. "'Twas after mass one Sunday it struck her. Her heart gave a le'p and a flutter, and then all was over."

"Tare an' ages!" cried Barney. "'Tis most amazin'."

"No more than for a tame and sensible baste to be took with a notion to le'p like a deer."

"Begorra!" ejaculated Barney, with a start. "I clane forgot the heifer. Come along, and we'll get her into the crate."

"If 'twas me," said Terence, holding back, "I'd l'ave her be for to-day, and I'd off to the Widdy McGivern's."

"And lose the sale of me calf!"

"I'd lose the sale of me sowl for a woman, the right one," returned Terence.

"'Tis terrible suddent," said Barney, wavering; then, being by nature a little contrary, he declared he must go to Rockmore.

Terence knew better than to argue the question, but he wore a grim smile as he followed Barney into the pen and helped him to corner the calf.

"Aisy now, Terence," said Barney, "and we'll lade her out gintle. With me houldin' her ear and you steerin' behind, she'll come like a lamb. Won't you, mavourneen? Step out now, me girl."

"Aisy's the word," responded Terence, but at that moment he gave a twist to the tail of the calf that was the one touch of art, so to speak, between the spark and the powder. There was a sudden upheaval, and with ears flat to her head and uplifted tail the calf sped away like the wind, while Barney and Terence picked themselves up and stared after her. Off she went across country, leaping fences and ditches and

"'OCH, WIRRA!' CRIED NORAH, A SMILE ON HER LIPS. 'I DON'T WANT YOU TO TURN INTO A SAINT OR A SINNER.'"

wriggling through hedges, while Terence held his breath, hardly daring to trust to his senses, for straight as the flight of a bee she kept on her way to the Widow McGivern's. A mile and a quarter she covered in less than six minutes, looking no larger than a rabbit as they watched her scramble through the last of the hedges.

"The baste is possessed of the divil," Barney muttered, turning pale as she vanished.

"No," said Terence, sternly. "'Tis plain it's the will of the saints. Go!" he commanded, extending his arm.

Barney wavered.

"Yesterday," said he, "I couldn't."

"And to-morrow," added Terence, "like enough you wouldn't."

"But to-day," went on Barney, a gleam in his eyes, "I'll not be bate by a calf."

The rest was easy for Terence. When he stepped into the dairy, there was Norah, as fresh as a rose and as sweet as her butter.

"Norah," said he, with a choke in his voice—"Norah, me *darlin'!*" Then he kissed her, and she, stepping back from her butter, tripped fair into his arms, blushing and smiling.

"What is it?" she asked, in a whisper. "Och, Terence, there's tears in your eyes!"

"They come from me heart; 'tis swimmin' with joy. Norah," he said, holding her closer, "we'll not be parted again. Your father——"

"Me father!" she cried, freeing herself from his arms. "Och, Terence, he's not kilt or hurted?"

"That he isn't," declared Terence, "but him and the red-and-white heifer is runnin' amuck."

"Glory be to the saints! Whatever is that?"

"It depinds," returned Terence, his eyes twinkling, "somewhat on the runner, and on the kind of notion that sazes a crathur'. An iliphant, now, likes to pull houses over, drink wells dry with his trunk, and throw people inside to drown; a prize-fighter'll perhaps turn into a parson; a praste to a heretic; a saint to a sinner; a lad fall in love with his grandmother's cousin; the most pious, respectable, dacint ould gintlemen will fling over the traces and cut up the divil; ould ladies'll lose their heads over lads; and——"

"But the red-and-white heifer?" broke in Norah.

"She give a le'p and a jump, kicked over me and your father, and away over fences and ditches she went like the wind."

"But me father—he's never hurted?"

"Excipt in his heart; that's softened. He picked himself up, and, begorra! he was distracted with love for me own Aunt McGivern."

"He never told me," pouted Norah. "Not a day will I live with a stepmother."

"Not an hour, for that matter," declared Terence. "But, to give him his due, he hadn't the time, it took him that suddent. His heart gave a le'p, turned twice to the front and once to the back, and then all was over. Off he went like a steeplechaser over the fields to ax me aunt would she have him."

"Mercy on us! I'd never have thought it of father."

"And then," went on Terence, "what he took from the calf, I caught from him, and I knew it was in me to do wonderful things if I didn't hould back."

"Och, wirra!" cried Norah, a smile on her lips. "I don't want you to turn into a saint or a sinner."

"But love rolled all the wonderful things into one," said Terence, "and the notion that sazed me was this: not a day longer would I l'ave off the weddin'."

"Terence," whispered Norah, between smiles and tears, her head on his shoulder, "when—when we get ould, and when—I'm a widdy, *you'll* not—be after——"

"That I won't," responded Terence, his voice trembling. "Never but one for me."

The Truth About Palmists and Palmistry.

A PALMIST'S REVELATIONS.

By HERBERT ILLINGWORTH.

FOR nine years I had the reputation of being a clever palmist, and now that I have retired from this means of a livelihood it seems like a dream and a rude awakening to try to explain how I happened to become "a knight of the mitt," as we professionals call it.

I had no special qualifications for the study, beyond a fairly good memory; and the success I obtained came from profiting by my mistakes and through the demands of thousands of "patients" whom I simply had to read right if I wanted to get my fee from them.

Before taking up palmistry I was a clerk in a Chicago wholesale house, and it was a book that I casually took up one evening that first aroused my interest in the subject.

After reading this and a good many other books which, as a matter of fact, told me little more, I gave amateur "exhibitions" of palmistry on a number of social occasions.

A sudden financial reverse made me take my first important step as a professional. Taking a name that was easy to remember, I opened an office, or, as we palmists term it, "parlours," in a large house on a "smart" street. Then I advertised in several newspapers, and sat in my "parlours" awaiting returns.

I soon found out that the fortune-teller has to build up a practice the same as the physician or lawyer, and slow but sure were my "readings" and predictions. As they were based in each case on deductions from the character of the person I was reading, my predictions in the majority of cases came true, some with tragic suddenness.

So, little by little, I found my waiting-room daily holding those mind-weary, wavering, and suspicious types of men and women that are to be found in the waiting-rooms of every kind of fortune-teller.

The life of a fortune-teller is not always an easy one, but what I learned during my professional career in this line taught me one thing—and that was that my troubles were as atoms to the huge burden of trouble that many of my "patients" had to bear.

Women, as a rule, are easy to read—first because they are so easily classified in respect to age and appearance, and secondly owing to their inability to keep silent. When you are "fishing" for the event in their lives on which they seek information, if you so much as hint on a line of thought that tells of the event, they are bound to burst out with a hurried "Yes, yes! Go on!"

The reader would, no doubt, like to have the answers to two questions which are the most important predictions, and they are:—

"How can you tell whether a person is married or not?"

"How can you tell how many children they have?"

I will answer the questions in turn, and in the beginning I must state that "patients" unknowingly tell the palmist the answers to the questions above—not directly, but through a system all our own we get the answers.

This system is almost perfect, and built up from reading and meeting thousands of persons yearly.

Take, for example, the first question: How can you tell whether a person is married? To begin with, it depends upon your "patient's" age, which you can guess from observation and from the skin of the back of the hand. The condition of the nail filament will help also, if you are deceived by a well-preserved man or woman.

Here is an illustration. Your "patient" is a woman about thirty-five years old, very well dressed, nails well manicured, and altogether a fascinating "patient." She is wearing no rings. This, in itself, arouses suspicion, for

"WOMEN, AS A RULE, ARE EASY TO READ."

you know there is not one woman out of a hundred who does not wear a ring of some kind. This makes you think that she may have removed her wedding-ring before she entered the room. The ring, however, will probably leave a mark, which you can easily find on her third finger. If the finger is thin and gives nothing for guidance, I say to her, "There is sickness marked on this line for the oldest child in the family." Her manner will soon indicate whether she is married or not.

There are a few "patients" who are or have been married, and have no children. These are in the minority, and they will either tell you they have no children, or will ask you if you mean the "oldest child in their mother's family." The result is the same.

If the "patient" has a child, how quickly she will tell you its age, taking all the pride of a good mother in answering promptly!

The fortune-teller now has a store of information to work on, for the answer to this question is the very keystone of the arch. With it I build up the parents' life-story from the age of their oldest child. For example, the age of the oldest child is given as fourteen; from this age you can safely predict there is more than one child in this family. This you can verify by remarking upon the brightness of their youngest child, who, as the mother gladly tells you, is ten years old.

Now, how many children have they? Why, three, of course!

You find out which month the "patient" was born in by saying, in a decided tone of voice:—

"You were born in February."

The "patient," if not born in this month, will reply:—

"No, I was born in May."

"I beg your pardon; you resemble a February type."

The "patient" has again given much more material to work with, as a study of the "signs of the zodiac" tells me here that a person born in May is inclined to certain tendencies in character, illness, and career.

You can tell a man's business, trade, or profession by seeing the man first and his hand afterwards. You can always tell a postman from one shoulder being much lower down than the other, through carrying his heavy mail-bag.

The doctor and lawyer are "easy marks" for the fortune-teller, for they "carry" their profession all over them in many signs; the barber is easy also, for who has a cleaner and softer hand than he? The tailor is "tabbed" from the marks on his fingers, the result of long use of scissors.

It did not take me long to realize that persons coming to consult me wanted to know the outcome of a particular event, and not to have their fortune told as regards many events in the future.

Take, for instance, the case of a man. He walks into the "parlour," looking around the room as if he expected to be confronted by hidden enemies, and eyeing me with a suspicious look, as if I were going to try to steal his watch or tie-pin. He sits down at my small reading-table and, when asked to place his hand palm upwards, does so reluctantly. After I have read his character he is restless, and I, seeing it, immediately remark that he wants to know about a certain woman. He at once brightens up and, if he does not actually say so in words, I know from the look of surprise in his eyes and the restless moving of his body on the chair that I have hit on just what he wants to know.

Mind you, I do not know whether he is married or not, but it is a safe bet it is a woman who is worrying him; this is the case with ninety-five out of one hundred. The exceptions are those few men who want to know about a business change, and the attitude of one seeking information on this point is as easy to read as if it were written on his forehead in indelible ink, and as easy to answer.

It is a different matter in the case of a woman; she may come in bent on seeking information about a love affair, a business change, or, if married, the illness of her husband or child, re-marriage, possibly divorce, or the settlement of a family estate. If young and bearing all the signs of lack of fixity of thought, it is always a love affair.

Though in my career I have had to place charms or "good luck" amulets of various kinds, from common lima beans to a neat embroidered velvet bag filled with slippery elm-bark to give it a "mysterious" odour, on many of my "patients," I did so not alone for the sake of the money, but because, realizing the utter inability of the "patients" to grasp the prediction I made that "everything would come out all right," I found the charms, insignificant to look at, gave confidence when presented with constant repetition of the importance of their being retained.

Where a woman "patient" wanted to know about a love affair, or the man's intentions, I would tell her after the "reading" to try to send the man to me, then I would be better equipped to predict the future of her affair. She would promise readily to do so, and as

she was leaving the room I would ask her if she knew the man's birthday. She would reply, possibly :—

" October the tenth."

Down that date would go in my memorandum book as soon as she closed the door, and with it a few details about her affair. When the man did come (and leave it to the woman to get him there !) all I had to do to " place " him, or discover what he wanted to know, was to find out his birthday.

He would reply, say, " October the tenth." Well, lightning seldom strikes in the same place, and it is not very often in the course of a week that we have two men born on the same day of the year, so, having a good memory (an essential thing in fortune-telling), backed up by the notes in my book on the table before me, I know his mission as well as if he sat down and told me in so many words.

There are tricks in all trades, and fortune-tellers resort to many through sheer necessity. The hand in many cases will tell the physician of hereditary physical defects from the parents, as well as individual physical weaknesses, such as heart, chest, and abdominal complaints ; but after examining thousands of hands in hospitals, jails, asylums, and institutions of every description in a dozen cities during nine years' interest and work in palmistry, I am forced to one conclusion—that, so far as palmistry goes, it fails absolutely to show accidents, sudden death by violence, and, in hundreds of cases, natural death or the number of times and the age of marriage or divorce. Palmistry is thoroughly unreliable in telling the number of children born to the individual, or the many changes, good or bad, that fall to the lot of a man or woman.

In making this statement I lay myself open to many an argument from those who have studied palmistry and find they are able to relate cases where they have verified predictions of death, suicide, insanity, divorce, marriage, and the number of children and serious and important changes. But I only ask fair-minded persons, professional or amateur, who have ever studied and put in practice their knowledge of palmistry, how many mistakes they have made when they were so sure of their predictions and the deductions from what they read from these palms.

Have you ever examined the hands of the inmates of an asylum, hospital, or prison ? If so, you found only too surely that your knowledge, no matter how thorough, of the science of palmistry failed you completely when it came to reading the hands of all classes of humanity.

During my career as a professional palmist in Chicago the impression of a hand was made in plaster of Paris by some doctors, and carried round to some thirty palmists then practising in the city. I was one of them, and each prediction made by the palmists from the lines of this hand was taken down in shorthand and published. It proved that not one of us had read the hand right, as the man who owned it had lingered in a hospital for three days, some weeks before, and died from the result of a street-car accident which caused concussion of the brain and injuries to the arms. In fact, the plaster of Paris cast of this hand was made after the arm of this man had been amputated.

Twenty-six of the palmists said the man was living, the others predicted death, but could not state at what age death would occur, or what would be the cause of death.

Now, if you are sure you can predict events and read the past in the palms, collect ten persons whom you do not know, hang a curtain in a doorway between two rooms, and, while you remain in one, let the ten in turn pass their hands through a small hole in the curtain. Read the ten persons' palms without seeing their faces or hearing their voices, and you will find at the finish what a terrible mess you have made of the readings. I know, as I was put to this test, with a dozen others, in Brooklyn some years ago.

In writing this article I am not actuated by a desire to dispute the statements of many conscientious authors of books on palmistry, written from their convictions after examining hands and palms ; but I do know that if, for a living, they applied their rules of reading to the " patients " who enter the " parlours " of a professional palmist, they would starve to death.

Illustration No. 1 shows the photograph of the lines of the palm of a man seventy years old. Now, according to all the laws of palmistry, the life-line shows that this man should be dead and buried, from the breaks on the lower part of the line. This man's career is the very opposite to that one would read, according to the laws of palmistry, from his palms.

He is the father of nine children, was married at twenty-two, served in his country's service twelve years, was wounded in three engagements, had concussion of the brain through a fall at twenty-eight, was given up for dead at thirty-five with tumour, and broke his leg in his fortieth year. Strange to relate,

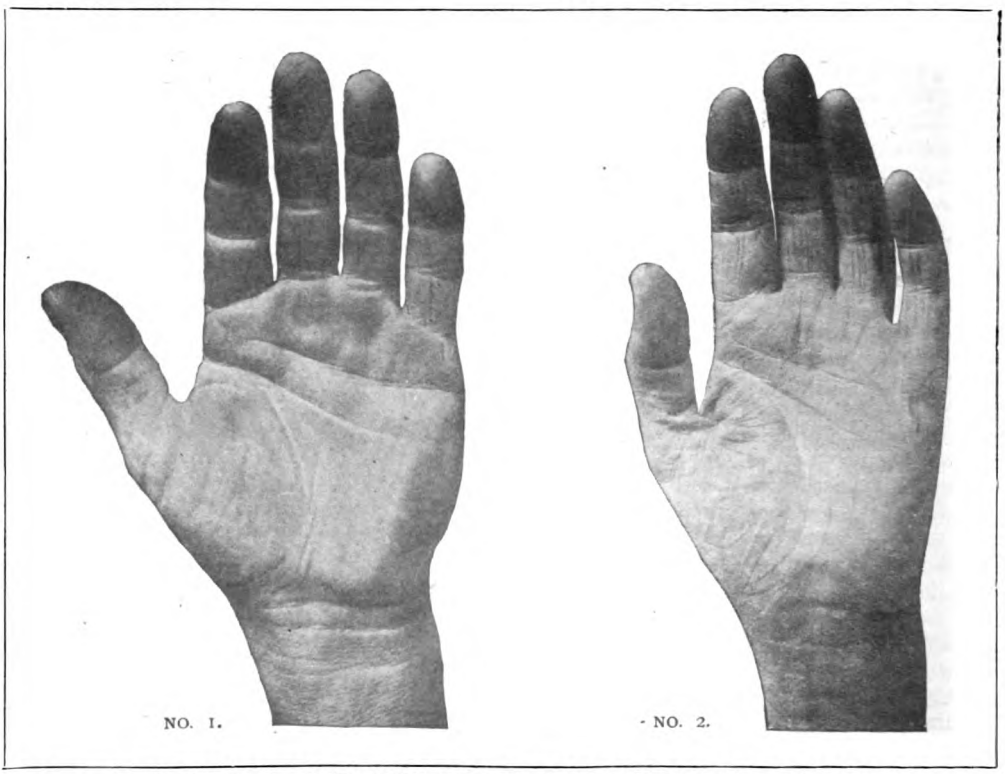
he has been married twice, and the nine children of his first wife are living. He has followed one line of business strictly since he left His Majesty's service for nearly thirty years, has made money, and is now living a retired life, a hale, hearty, genial old gentleman.

Now, I defy any palmist to tell the above from the lines in his palm (something they are pretending to do every day of their lives). I took this hand to nine London palmists with reputations for cleverness and a knowledge of their science. Two refused to read the photograph, giving as their reason that they would rather see the individual who owned it, and the others were absolutely wrong in every event.

Illustration No. 2 is the photograph of the hand of a lady now in her fifty-fifth year, who has suffered from spinal disease that has kept her in bed most of the time since her fourteenth year.

According to the laws of palmistry and the readings and predictions made by the same palmists who read for illustration No. 1, this lady should have married twice and had from one to four children, and the only ill-health she should have had would come through throat and chest complaint and heart trouble.

Now, after thorough investigation into the lives of these two whose hands are illustrated, I unhesitatingly declare that in almost every instance in the predictions of the so-called palmists, and applying the rules for reading the hands from the books of well-known authors, palmistry absolutely fails in not only these two cases, but in hundreds of others during my experience, study, and investigation as to why fortune-tellers exist and ply their "trade" in the gathering-places of reasoning human beings.



TWO TYPICAL INSTANCES OF THE FALLACY OF PALM-READING.

THE LIFE-STORIES OF THE OWNERS OF THESE TWO HANDS, AS EXPLAINED IN THE TEXT, WERE IN EVERY RESPECT THE VERY OPPOSITE OF THOSE WHICH WOULD BE DENOTED BY THE LAWS OF PALMISTRY.

TOMMY

By VIOLET·M METHLEY·

Illustrated by STANLEY DAVIS

ROUND the edge of the partly open door a smooth black head appeared, and drew back, quick as a lizard.

But Joe Ryan did not see it; all his thoughts were concentrated upon the contents of a large American cloth-covered basket which stood open at his feet.

With chin sunk on his shining shirt-front, and hands deep thrust into his pockets, the young man stared gloomily at the hopes in concrete form which lay there, crushed and broken.

Travelling down to Blenworth that afternoon, the future had glowed in the cosy firelight, shining from that little home of his own for which he had waited so long. He and Florrie would be able to marry soon. His chance had come with this performance at one of the greatest houses in England. If he could enthral the audience of youthful aristocrats, more shining triumphs would surely follow. Royal commands, royal applause; maybe, some day, a tie-pin, crowned and monogrammed in rubies, awkward to wear, but glorious to possess. Already on the dingy glass of the carriage window he saw his name writ large, "Joe Ryan, the World-Famed Ventriloquist."

Well, it was all over now; he had lost his chance.

The smooth black head reappeared; this time was not withdrawn. After a few instants of reconnaissance its owner slipped into the room, and spoke to Ryan's heedless back.

"I say! You're the stomach-talker, aren't you?"

Ryan swung round, and the frowning weariness of his pale face relaxed. This was such a very small boy to own such a very deep voice.

He was attired in a snowy duck sailor suit, ultra-perfect in its appointments, from the plaited silk lanyard to the scarlet socks and diminutive patent leather shoes. Beautifully fitting silky black hair covered the shapely little head, dwindling to a fascinating peak at the nape of the neck. Wide dark eyes regarded Ryan gravely, eyes oddly wiser and older than

the soft, childish mouth.

"Well, ventriloquist is a prettier word, you know," the young man answered, seriously.

"I can't say that." The little boy advanced a few steps nearer. "An' the other means the same. Lexie said so. You don't mind if I call you that, do you?"

"Well—no," Ryan said, doubtfully.

"I know you *are* you, you know." The small boy spoke now with a cheerful air of confidence. "'Cause Paul and I saw you at the Coliseum. And, please, will you stomach-speak now, this very instant minute?"

Ryan felt much as one does when abruptly called upon to be funny in company.

"I think you must wait until a bit later, you know," he said, awkwardly. "When the show begins——"

"I can't." The little fellow's voice rose to a perfect wail. "I shall be in bed."

"I SAY! YOU'RE THE STOMACH-TALKER, AREN'T YOU?'

"Haven't you come to the party?"

Ryan eyed the point-device suit.

"Yes, but—but Lexie's looking for me to send me to bed—the mean pig."

"Who's Lexie?"

"My big sister."

"Then what have you done?"

Ryan was still young enough to understand the ways of the human boy.

"Oh, nothing p'tickler. I on'y used her pink shoes as boats in the bath. An' I *was* drying them at the fire."

"So Lexie was annoyed?"

"Yes, but she needn't have asked mother

to send me to bed before the stomach-speaking —mean pig."

"You were naughty, you know," Ryan said, judicially.

"Not so very, and I *will* hear you stomach-speak."

The small boy frowned until his neat black brows were near to meeting, and Ryan laughed at the comical air of resolution.

"Perhaps if you said you were sorry, Miss —er—Lexie would forgive you?" he suggested.

Vehement head-shaking answered him.

"She wouldn't. She thinks she's *everybody* 'cause she's done up her old hair. She's looking for me now, so I ran away. I'm *hiding*." This with an air of great secrecy. "D'reckly she finds me, she'll send me to bed. So do please——"

Ryan basely attempted to gain time.

"What's your name?" he asked.

"Maurice Cyril Henry Charles—and I'm ten years old last birthday. Oh, *do* begin." The little boy danced up and down in his excitement, then paused, arrested by a sudden thought. "Oh, where's Tommy?"

Ryan's face darkened, and he spoke almost savagely.

"Tommy's—dead!"

"Oh!" Maurice's eyes and mouth rounded in half-frightened amazement. "But he wasn't really and truly 'live, was he—like me?"

"No, you're right." Ryan laughed bitterly. "He wasn't truly 'live, like you, but he's thoroughly dead now. Look here, my son."

He jerked his hand towards the American cloth-covered basket, rather coffin-like in shape. Within, as though to carry out the gruesome illusion, lay a small limp figure, attired in a khaki suit.

"Oh, his head's all smashed." The little boy, peeping under Ryan's arm, gave a gasp of dismay.

The head and face of the figure were a crushed, featureless mass. With a stifled curse, Ryan dropped the lid and sat down upon the basket, whilst Maurice drew close to him in concerned distress.

"Who broke him?" he asked, solemnly.

"I don't know—one of the servants here, I suppose."

"Then *he* ought to go to bed. I'll go and tell."

"No, don't you say anything." Ryan caught the small boy back by the slack of the coat, pulling him on to his knee. "That wouldn't do any good—only make matters worse to have a fuss with the servants, But you see you're not going to miss much. sonny, even if you are sent to bed. My show will be an uncommonly poor one without Tommy."

Maurice nodded with honest sympathy.

"Yes, Tommy was *much* funnier than you," he said, frankly. "He made better jokes."

"Yes, but I *made* him talk, you know," Ryan explained, rather aggrievedly. "It was me speaking all the time, really."

"*Was it?* Oh!" Maurice stared wonderingly. "But he talked so squeaky, not like you a bit."

"Like this, eh?" With motionless lips, Ryan rattled off sentence after sentence in Tommy's well-known tones, whilst the small boy on his knee wriggled in sheer delight.

"But you do it just as well without Tommy," he cried.

"I'm afraid the audience wouldn't think so. No, that part must be left out, worse luck—unless you like to take Tommy's place."

Ryan was unprepared for the effect of his jesting words. The little boy's answer came stumbling out, incoherent with excitement.

"Oh, would you let me be? Please do—I could really. I'd jus' sit on your knee like this, jus' like Tommy."

"It's impossible," Ryan began, only to be strangled by a pair of small clinging arms.

"Oh, do—*do*—do let me! I'll be as quiet as a mouse. I won't move. Oh, I do so want to be Tommy."

"Whatever would your people say?"

"They won't know who I am, an' I do so want to hear you, and Lexie will send me to bed, *straight*. Do let me be Tommy."

Ryan sat motionless, with the small boy's eager eyes fixed on his grave face. There were possibilities in the suggestion, and it would get him out of a very nasty difficulty. Without a puppet, his performance was foredoomed to miserable failure.

"Well, if I *do* let you," he began, and was from that moment lost. All that remained was to teach Maurice his part.

But here the little boy proved a most unexpectedly apt pupil. He had not watched his prototype for nothing, and the stiff mechanical movements of his head and neck were comically realistic.

"Now we must dress you up in Tommy's clothes, my son," Ryan said, laughing. "Jump down, and I'll get 'em out."

The headless puppet was disrobed, whilst Maurice tugged energetically and unskilfully at the fastenings of his sailor suit. Fortunately

the real and sham boys were much of a size, and the khaki garments gave their new wearer huge satisfaction.

"Don't I look splendiferous?" he cried. "Just like a real soldier!"

"You must sit still, whilst I paint your face," Ryan commanded, and produced a make-up box.

The result, after ten minutes' labour, was absurdly doll-like. The pale little face was plastered over with white and scarlet, the eyes outlined and blackened, the corners of the small mouth elongated into a wide scarlet grin. When long-fingered gloves were drawn over the little boy's hands, his personality was entirely swamped in that of the ventriloquist's marionette.

Then, of a sudden, Maurice started and clung to Ryan, fright showing even through the plastered whiteness of his face.

"Oh, I hear Lexie coming," he whispered. "That's her heels clicking. Please—please—don't tell her it's me."

Ryan caught up the little boy, and seated him squarely upon the basket, warning him, by a gesture, not to move. And straightway there entered a girl, tall, radiantly fair, very young and very severe. Her pale hair was fastened in a coil at the nape of her neck with a huge black bow, her simple white dress just skirted her slim ankles.

She paused in the doorway and surveyed the room with eyes like pale blue ice and chin tilted high. Behind her appeared the figure of a good-looking young fellow in uniform.

The girl spoke in those cold accents only achieved to perfection by a highly-educated flapper.

"I suppose you are the ventriloquist?" she said. "Have you seen, by any chance, a small boy in a white sailor suit?"

"He came in here about half an hour ago," answered Ryan, truthfully.

"And went away again?"

Ryan bowed.

"Only I and Tommy are here now, as you see—madam." He hesitated over a form of address, and the girl's companion grinned behind her back.

"Tommy—oh, your puppet?" The note of interrogation in her voice was merged into a tone of kindly patronage. "He will amuse the children, I am sure."

"*And* the grown-ups," the young soldier suggested. "I think a ventriloquist's awfully good fun."

"I'm afraid I've rather outgrown that sort of thing." The girl shrugged her shoulders with the superb scorn of the very young. "One does get so bored."

"Then perhaps you'll sit out the performance—with me?" Ryan caught the softly-spoken words, saw the answering smile which transfigured for a moment the severe young face. Next moment she spoke majestically once more.

"If my brother should come here again, please ring the bell at once," she ordered, and departed with her companion.

"Pig!" the small boy commented emphatically. "Spiteful cat!" Suddenly his voice rose on a note of extreme glee. "But she didn't know me. She didn't know me a tiny bit."

"'S-sh!" warned Ryan. "Someone's coming."

A stately footman entered to notify to the ventriloquist that the audience was assembled and that the performance might begin. In an icily superior manner he departed, bearing condescendingly the high folding table sacred to stage magicians; whilst Ryan lingered to speak to his youthful assistant, as he picked him up in his arms.

"Mind, you mustn't say a word," he whispered. "And whatever happens, don't laugh."

For the first time since the very beginning of his professional career Ryan felt thoroughly nervous. From the elaborate little stage, with its crimson velvet curtains, he obtained at first only a vague impression of rows of childish faces against the background of a gorgeous, gilded room, faces eager and interested enough, in spite of the fine clothes and finer names of their wearers.

Close to the platform were a group of older people, showing glimpses of polished shirt-fronts and the frosty glitter of diamonds. Ryan, his eyes growing accustomed to the light, saw that they centred round a handsome, matronly woman, magnificent in mauve velvet.

Once the performance was fairly under way, Ryan's nervousness decreased with each moment. For Tommy's understudy was a huge success; from the very first there was no doubt about that. A shout of glee from the boy and girl audience greeted his appearance, dangling with most unlifelike limpness from Ryan's arm.

If there was rather more movement in the little figure than was common, it was all ascribed to unusually perfect mechanism, and Ryan caught murmurs of praise from the grown-up members of the audience.

The ventriloquist was spurred on to excel

"'HAVE YOU SEEN, BY ANY CHANCE, A SMALL BOY IN A WHITE SAILOR SUIT?' 'ONLY I AND TOMMY ARE HERE NOW, AS YOU SEE—MADAM.'"

himself. Never had his dialogue been so witty and sparkling, never had his voice felt more perfectly under control.

As the outbursts of infectious laughter rose again and again, he was even able to face callously the possibility of detection. Surely, even if the fraud was discovered, it would all pass off as a very good joke?

At last the ventriloquial part of the programme was finished and the pseudo-Tommy deposited in a chair in an adjoining anteroom to await the end of the performance.

Ryan returned to the platform—and to his doom.

To the accompaniment of the children's laughter, he gave his most brilliant tricks more brilliantly than ever before. The young man's pale face was flushed, his own laugh came readily; between him and his audience was established an electric bond of sympathy, that most heart-warming of inspirations.

And then, as he prepared for his grand climax, a few words from the group beneath him caught his ears.

Ryan's wits were always particularly alert when he was conjuring. Without ceasing for an instant in his stream of patter, he listened. Miss "Lexie's" uniformed companion had approached the dignified lady in mauve, and spoke softly.

"Your Royal Highness, Princess Alexandra thought that you ought to be told. Prince Maurice is missing. I did not come until we had searched everywhere."

Mechanically Ryan went on speaking, scarcely knowing what he said. He felt cold and sick with the realization of his position.

"Your Royal Highness"—that was why the face of the lady in mauve had been so familiar—"Princess Alexandra"—"Prince Maurice."

The Princess had risen with a little half-stifled cry. Ryan could see that her face had whitened pitifully, hear her whispered words: "I will come at once. Oh, my little Maurice!"

The sob in her voice brought home to Ryan the unpardonable nature of his offence. Of course, he had acted in ignorance, but that was no excuse.

On the impulse of the moment, he sprang forward, meaning to confess at once. His lips were opened to proclaim the little boy's safety, when he realized that the Princess and her attendants had already hurried from the room. He stood, hesitating, as the young man who had brought the news approached the stage and spoke in a courteous undertone.

"Perhaps you would not mind continuing your performance, sir," he said. "The Princess has unfortunately been compelled to leave."

Ryan acquiesced dumbly, a faint hope stirring in his mind. After all, it was still vaguely possible that he might escape detection, that he might be able to convey the little Prince to his own rooms unnoticed.

How he contrived to conclude his performance the young man could never remember. He finished at last, and left the stage to the sounds of vigorous, unrestrained applause. He found Prince Maurice in the ante-room, just as he had left him, and entered on a whispered and disjointed explanation.

"I say, my son—I mean your Royal Highness—you've been missed. They're searching the place for you. Your mother—I mean her Royal Highness—is frightened out of her wits, and—and—my word, I'm in a nice hole. Why on earth was I such a fool as to let you do it?"

"I don't care," Prince Maurice proclaimed, defiantly.

"But I do." In his desperation Ryan forgot all the respect due to youthful semi-royalty. "Of course, it doesn't matter to you. But it means ruin to me."

Even the small boy was impressed by the misery in his companion's voice.

"P'r'aps no one'll know," he suggested, doubtfully. "Lexie came in here again a little while ago, and she didn't find out."

Ryan stooped and picked up the boy.

"Tell me the way to your rooms," he said, curtly. "That's the only thing to do."

But even as the words left his lips, he realized their hopelessness. For on the threshold appeared the Princess Alexandra, holding in her hands the little sailor suit discarded by Prince Maurice. She stood in the doorway, paler and colder than ever, with mingled fear and anger in her blue eyes.

"Where did you get these clothes?" she demanded. "I have just found them amongst your things."

"I—I—your Royal Highness——" Ryan stumbled, seeking for words.

"They belong to Prince Maurice. Where is he? Tell me at once, or I will call the servants—send for the police. *Where is he?*"

"Here!" Ryan spoke in desperation, thrusting forward the child in his arms, whilst the little boy protested vehemently.

"I say, you *are* mean. You needn't have told. I don't believe she'd ever have guessed."

"How dared you?" the girl spoke slowly, and Ryan flinched beneath her cold scorn. "What—insolence!"

"'I'LL TELL HER ABOUT YOU AND CAPTAIN DREW,' HE PERSISTED, DOGGEDLY. 'I SAW YOU.'"

Ryan could find no words of defence. He stood motionless, with bent head and flushed face, whilst the little Prince flared up like a plucky bantam.

"You jus' be quiet, an' don't talk rot, Lexie," he cried. "It wasn't *his* fault. I made him let me. Tommy was broke, an' I wanted to pay you out for being such a mean cat, and sending me to bed."

His sister entirely disregarded the small boy's vehemence. She spoke again, her eyes still fixed on the wretched Ryan.

"You shall be imprisoned for this," she said. "How do we know that you did not intend to kidnap him—to hold him for a reward?"

"I assure your Royal Highness——" Ryan began, in desperation, but the girl interrupted him.

"You may keep your explanations for the police," she said, superbly. "I shall send for them at once."

She made a movement to ring the electric bell, but the little Prince had wriggled from Ryan's arms and faced her, crimson-cheeked.

"If you call anyone, Lexie, I'll tell mother what you did jus' now," he said.

With eyes ablaze with anger, the Princess turned upon the little boy.

"What do you mean?" she demanded.

"I'll tell her about you and Captain Drew," he persisted, doggedly. "I saw you."

"You didn't! You didn't see anything."

"I did. You came in here, and you thought I was just Tommy, and he——"

"Be quiet!" The girl's cheeks were flaming with anger and shame.

"Yes, he did. And then you——"

"Do you hear me? *Be quiet!* Oh!" Her voice failed her; she stood motionless, biting her lips, whilst Prince Maurice nodded triumphantly.

"There, miss! P'r'aps you won't be in such a hurry to tell now. What will mother say when she hears you k——"

"You hateful, sneaking little boy!" The stately Princess was completely swamped and outmastered by the furious schoolgirl.

"No, I'm not." Prince Maurice spoke loftily. "'Cause if you let me go to bed, and don't say anything about *him*, I won't tell mother one single word. But you must promise faithfully."

"I won't!"

"Then *I* won't!"

Boy and girl glared at each other. Twice she moved as though to ring the bell, twice drew back, biting her lips. Then, of a sudden, she capitulated.

"I—won't tell," she said, slowly and ashamedly.

"Then I won't, honest Injun and s'welp me," responded the little Prince, cheerfully. "You're not such a beast as I thought, Lexie."

"It's not because I mind a bit what you say; it's just so as not to get you into trouble."

The dignity of the Princess was returning.

"*That's* all right." Prince Maurice grinned knowingly. "An' now *he'd* better take my paint off, 'fore mother sees me."

"I should think so, you horrid, messy little boy, and be quick. Poor mother's bothered out of her wits. I shall say that you were hiding behind here."

"So I was—to hear the stomach-talking. Well, you *told* me yourself that was what it was called."

Ten minutes later a clean and sleepy sailor-garbed Prince insisted on kissing both Ryan and the dilapidated puppet.

"I'm *glad* he was broken, 'cause I was a much better Tommy," he boasted, vain-gloriously.

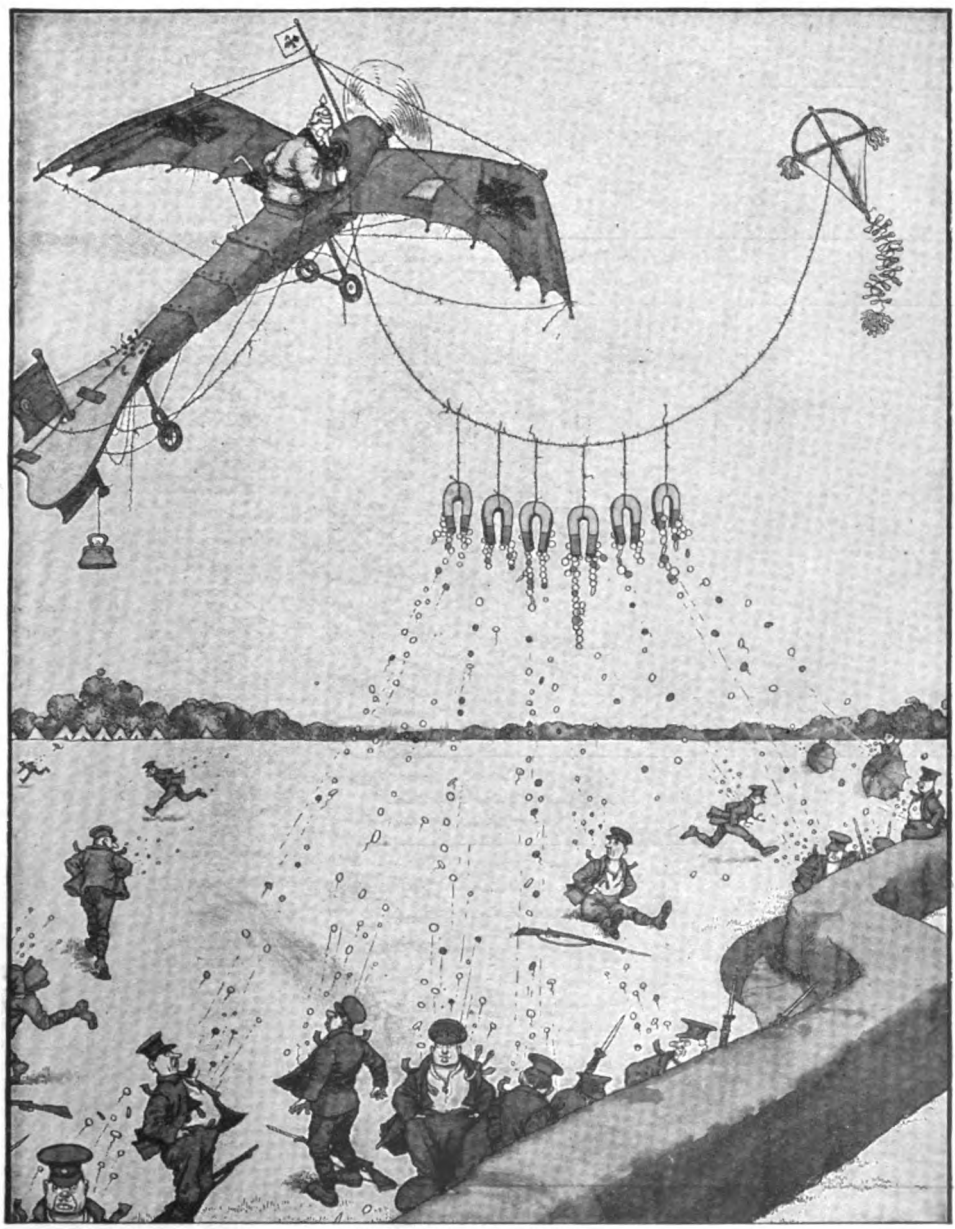
"You were splendid." Suddenly Ryan spoke frankly, meeting the severe blue eyes of the Princess. "Your Highness, will you think it impertinent if I—thank you? The performance this evening meant more than you know to me, and the girl I'm engaged to. If the Prince had not helped me—if you had not spared me—it would have meant more weary waiting for Florrie and me."

Blue eyes and brown eyes met honestly. The schoolgirl beneath the Princess spoke.

"I'm glad that it's all right. I—I don't believe I should have told of you, anyhow." She pulled a bangle from her slim wrist and held it out impulsively. "Give this to—to Florrie, please, as a wedding-present—from Maurice and me."

The Lighter Side of War.

A Selection of Drawings Reproduced by Permission from our Humorous Contemporaries.



THE BUTTON MAGNETS.

Used by the Germans to render our troops uncomfortable before an attack in force.

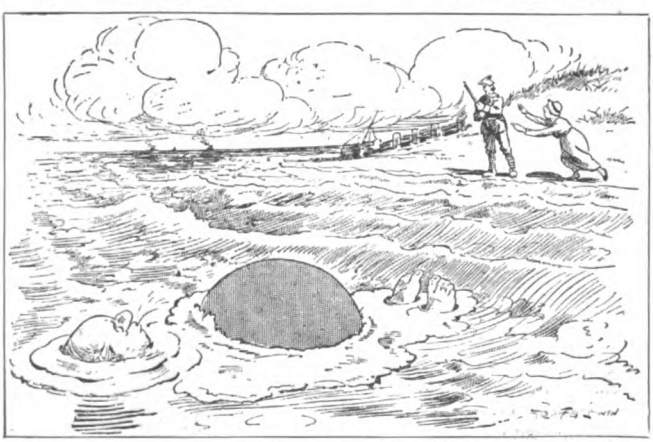
By W. HEATH ROBINSON.

From "The Sketch."

THE SPY.—"There is a food famine in London, and some of the best people are living on boiled firewood."

THE SPY.—"The shortage of officers in the English Army is so serious that they are now endeavouring to employ women as Generals."

By ALFRED LEETE. *From "London Opinion."*



"Don't shoot! It's my husband!! Not a floating mine!!!"

By F. G. LEWIN. *From "London Opinion."*

A CIVILIAN GUIDE TO THE ARMY.

Why not use the moustache to indicate military rank?

By LEWIS BAUMER.

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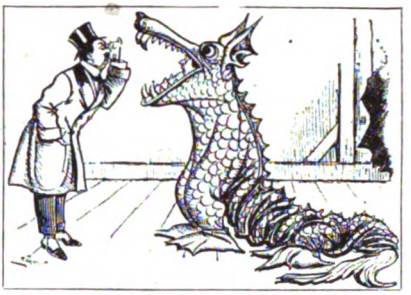
"Hands up, or I fire!"

By F. G. LEWIN.

From "London Opinion."



MANAGER (to dragon): "What's the meaning of this? Where's your hind legs?" Dragon: "They've enlisted, sir."

By C. HARRISON.

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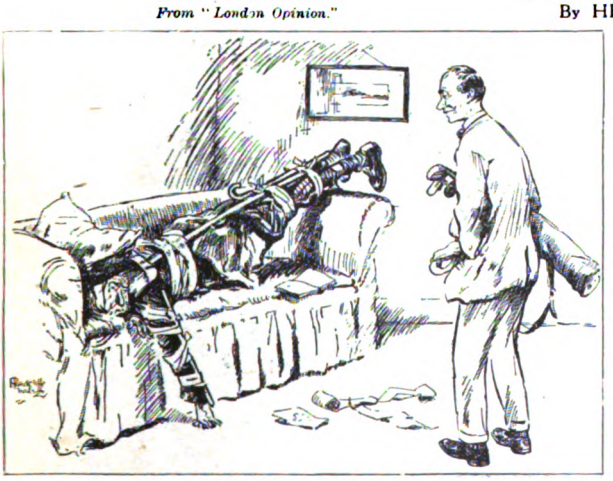
POLICEMAN (catching burglar): "Nah then, Crahn Prince—come out o' that!"

By G. L. STAMPA.

From "London Opinion."

GROUNDMAN: "'Ow are yer getting on?" Caddie: "Slow. Just now we're diggin' trenches; presently we 'opes to be able to advance a few yards."

By HESKETH DAUBENY. *From "The Tatler."*



HINTS TO HUSBANDS.

If your wife insists upon practising her bandaging on you, you must likewise insist on her undoing you before she leaves the room, otherwise you might be found by a chance visitor in this embarrassing position.

By RADCLIFFE WILSON. *From "The Bystander."*

THE PATRIOT'S SACRIFICE.

BARBER: "Anything else, sir?" Customer (who has been shaved): "Just trim my hair a little less Kaiserish."

By RICARDO BROOK.

Reproduced by the special permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS.—OUR BERT: "So this is the Continong! Blimy, give *me* Mawgit!"

By D. RAY. *From "The Tatler."*

The above sketch was drawn by an officer reader in the trenches.

GERMAN KAISER: "Let us prey."

By McHUTCHON.

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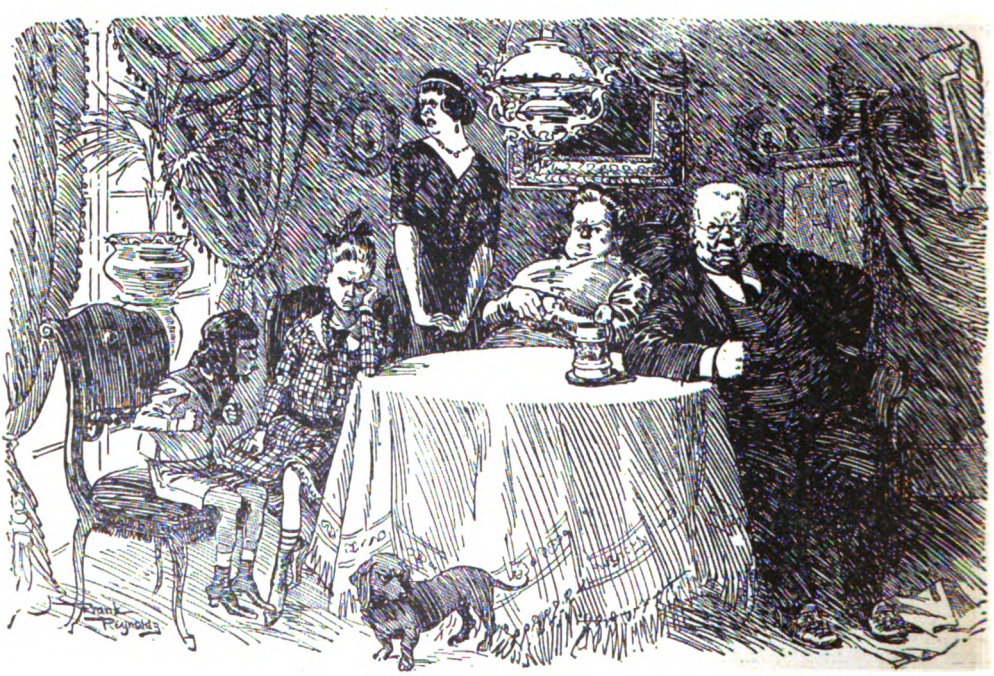


STUDY OF A PRUSSIAN HOUSEHOLD HAVING ITS MORNING HATE.

By FRANK REYNOLDS.

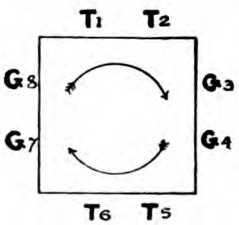
Reproduced by the special permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

265.—TURKS AND GERMANS.

FOUR Turkish officers and four German officers were seated at a table (as shown by the letters in the diagram) in Constantinople, and they had to select half of their number to attempt a very dangerous enterprise in Gallipoli. The Germans, inspired by the chivalrous spirit of "*kultur*," desired that the unpleasant business should fall to the Turks, and proposed that they (the Germans) should select a number and, starting at an individual to be chosen by the Turks, count out the required four. Thus, if the Turks had required them to start at No. 1 or No. 5, the Hun who had the matter in hand would have counted 18 in the direction of the arrows, and the lots would fall on four Turks successively. But when the Turks desired him to start at No. 3, he, by a stupid mistake, selected the number 33, which, as it happened, resulted in counting out all the Germans! Now, what is the smallest number the German should have selected to count out all the Turks, starting at No. 3? Remember that when a man is counted out he gets up from the table and is not included any more, the counting starting again at the next man. Count in the direction of the arrows.

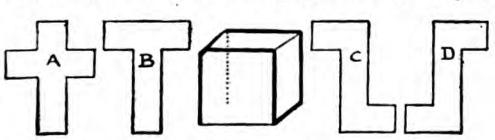


266.—THE DIGITAL CENTURY.

WRITE down the nine digits thus: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9, and, without disturbing their order, insert three arithmetical signs so that they shall represent 100. Here is an example with six signs: 12+3−4+5+67+8+9=100. Again, it can be done with four signs: 123+4−5+67−89=100. Now, try to do it with only three signs.

267.—THE CARDBOARD BOX.

READERS of these pages must have often remarked on the large number of little things that one would have expected to have been settled generations ago, and yet never appear to have been considered. Here is a case that has just occurred to me. If I have a closed cubical cardboard box, by running the pen-



knife along seven of the twelve edges (it must always be seven) I can lay it out in one flat piece in various shapes. Thus, in the diagram, if I pass the knife along the darkened edges and down the invisible edge indicated by the dotted line, I get the shape A. Another way of cutting produces B or C. It will be seen that D is simply C turned over, so we will not call that a different shape. Now, how many different shapes can be produced? There are not many, and it is quite an interesting little investigation that only requires a pencil and a piece of paper, with a certain amount of thought.

268.—MISSING WORDS.

WHAT Briton would consent, indeed,
To dine with . . . . . from the battle?
I'd rather with poor . . . . . feed,
Or eat in . . . . . with the cattle.

The three missing six-letter words all contain the same letters.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

261.—A STAR PUZZLE.

THERE are six different solutions in all, not counting, of course, mere reversals and reflections as different. Here is one of them:—

10

4 7 9 6

8 5

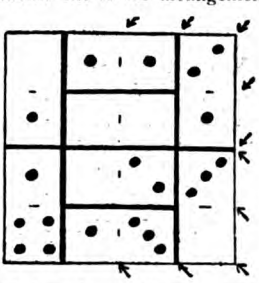
1 11 12 2

3

Readers may like to find the other five ways for themselves.

262.—A NEW DOMINO PUZZLE.

THE illustration shows an arrangement complying



with the conditions in which only twenty pips are employed—the fewest possible. It is essential that the dominoes be laid out in a slightly different formation from that given last month.

263.—A CRYPTIC SIGN-BOARD.

THE mysterious line "o 20, 100 o" may be read "O vingt, cent O," and have the sound "Au vin, sans eau," which is to say, "To the wine, without water," or, more freely translated, "To the undiluted wine."

264.—THE COIN AND HOLE.

STRANGE though it may at first appear, the half-crown may be passed through that small hole (of the size of a six-pence) without tearing the paper. This is the largest coin that can be used. First fold the paper across the centre of the hole and drop the coin into the fold. Then, holding the paper at A and B, bring the hands together upwards and the coin may be shaken through the hole.

The Enchanted Oranges.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

Translated by
A. H. GREENWOOD.

Illustrated by H. R. Millar.

THERE was once a prince who was handsome, rich, and amiable. The king, his father, wished very much to see him settled in life, and every day he said to him: "My son, why do you not choose a wife from among the beautiful ladies of the court?" But the prince regarded all the court ladies with indifference and always refused to choose a wife. At last, one day, weary of his father's remonstrances, he said: "My father, you wish to see me married. I do not care for the court ladies, who are not pretty enough to please me. I propose to take a long journey, if necessary round the world, and when I shall find a princess, fair as the snow, beautiful as the dawn, and as intelligent and amiable as an angel, I will make her my wife."

The king, delighted at his son's decision, bade him farewell, wished him success, and the prince joyfully set off. He began his journey gaily and went straight before him. At length he came to the sea, where he found a fine ship riding at anchor. He went on board, and a few minutes later mysterious, invisible hands weighed the anchor and the ship sailed. The prince journeyed on thus for three days, when the ship touched an island. The prince landed with his horse and continued his journey, in spite of the snow and ice which, to his surprise, surrounded him on all sides. At last he reached a little white house

and knocked at the door, which was opened to him by an old lady with white hair, who asked: "What do you want, young man?"

"I am seeking a wife who shall be the prettiest lady in the world. Can you tell me where to find her?" replied the prince.

"No, there is no wife for you in my kingdom. I am Winter, and I have no time to think of marriages. Go to my sister, Autumn, and perhaps she will find you the ideal wife whom you are seeking."

The prince thanked the white-haired lady, mounted his horse again, and continued his way. He soon observed that the snow and ice had disappeared and that the trees were all laden with beautiful fruit. At length he reached a little brown house and knocked at the door. Here he was greeted by a beautiful dark-eyed lady, who asked him in a gentle voice:—

"What do you want, young man, and what are you seeking in my kingdom?"

"I am seeking a wife," replied the prince.

"A wife," repeated the beautiful lady, in surprise. "I have no wife for you. I am Autumn and I am very busy indeed, for I have all the fruits to gather. Go to my sister, Summer; perhaps she will have time to think about finding you a pretty wife."

The prince, being thus dismissed, continued his journey, and observed before very long that the grass had grown and that the corn was ripe. It was no longer cold, but, on the contrary, very warm, and he was pleased to perceive at a short distance a little yellow house. Having reached the door he knocked, and it was opened to him by a pretty woman with brown hair and rosy cheeks, who asked him what he wanted.

"Madam," said the prince, politely, "I have had the honour of visiting your two sisters, Winter and Autumn. I asked them to find me a beautiful wife, but they were too busy and they sent me to you. Can you procure me the charming wife whom I am seeking so vainly?"

"Ah, prince," replied the brown-haired lady, "I also am too busy to find you a wife, but if you go to my sister Spring she will be sure to help you."

The prince thanked her and departed. A few minutes later he perceived that the grass was of a more delicate green and that all the trees were covered with blossom. Standing in a garden which was gay with tulips, hyacinths, daffodils, violets, lilac, and lilies of the valley, he saw a little green house.

Our hero having knocked at the door, a lady with fair hair and blue eyes immediately appeared and asked him what he wanted. The prince again replied, "I am seeking a wife. Your sisters Winter, Autumn, and Summer were too busy to find me one, but I hope that you will take pity on me and help me to find the charming person whom I seek so vainly."

"Yes, prince, I will help you," replied the lady. "Come inside my little house, sit down and I will give you some food, for you are, no doubt, hungry and thirsty."

The prince gladly accepted this invitat. and, when he had finished his meal, Spring brought him three large oranges, a pretty silver knife, and a beautiful golden cup, saying:—

"Prince, I present you with these magic articles. When you have almost reached your father's palace, stop at the fountain, take this silver knife, with which you will cut the first orange, and at the same moment a beautiful princess will appear. She will ask you for a drink. If you immediately give her a drink out of the golden cup she will stay with you and be your wife, but if you hesitate even for a single moment she will disappear and you will never see her again. If you have the misfortune to lose her, cut the second orange and a second princess will appear. She also will ask for a drink and, if you do not immediately satisfy her, she will disappear also.

"Then you will cut the third orange, and a third princess will appear who will make the same request. If you allow her to disappear you will never have a wife and you would not deserve one, for you would have been too stupid."

The prince listened attentively to the instructions of the pretty lady; took the silver knife, the golden cup, and the three oranges and departed. He traversed the kingdoms of Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter, and arrived at the sea shore, where he found his ship, embarked and, at the end of three days, reached the port from which he had sailed. A few days afterwards he reached the fountain near his father's palace.

He alighted from his horse and cut the first orange with a trembling hand. At the same moment a princess, fair as the snow, beautiful as the dawn, appeared before him and said, timidly:—

"Prince, I am thirsty. Will you please give me a drink?"

But the prince was so absorbed in admiring her that he forgot the warning of Spring, and did not give her a drink. The princess looked at him reproachfully, then disappeared.

The prince, in despair, wept and lamented, reproached himself a hundred times at least with being so stupid as to lose such a beautiful princess, and at last decided to cut the second orange.

A second princess, more beautiful than the first, immediately appeared and asked for a drink. But the prince was so amazed at her beauty that he stood with his mouth open, forgetting her request, until the second princess disappeared also. In vain the prince wept and lamented, repeating at least two hundred times, "How stupid I am!" But the princess did not reappear.

After having grieved for a long time the prince determined to cut the third orange, and a third princess, more beautiful than the two others, appeared before him.

"Prince," said she, timidly, "I am thirsty. I lease give me a drink."

The prince immediately gave her a drink. Then the princess sat down beside him, and when he asked her if she would be his wife she blushed and said "Yes."

The prince looked at her admiringly and said:—

"How beautiful you are! You must be the most beautiful person in the world! But your dress is not worthy of you. It is too mean. If you will wait here until I bring you a beautiful dress of white satin from my father's palace I shall be able to present you to my father as a great lady."

The princess was very timid and was afraid of remaining alone, but at last she consented to stay near the fountain, and the prince left her there. He went to the king's palace, told his father that he had found a beautiful princess, and promised to present her in an hour's time.

Then the prince begged from his favourite sister a white satin dress, ordered the best carriage to be got ready, and made all the necessary preparations to receive the princess with honour. When everything was ready he got into the carriage to fetch the beautiful princess, whom he was impatient to see again.

During his absence the princess, who was afraid of being alone, climbed into a large tree near the fountain and hid herself in the foliage. Her pretty face only was visible, and it was reflected in the pure water of the fountain as in a mirror.

A few minutes later a negress came to the fountain to draw water. She had a large pitcher in her hand and leant over the water in order to fill it. She saw the reflection of the pretty face in the water, and looked round to discover the person to whom it belonged. But, seeing no one, she soon decided that the image which she saw in the water was that of her own face.

"Oh! how pretty I am!" she said, gleefully. "I am as pretty as a princess. My mistress is always saying, 'Lucy, you are a perfect fright'; but it is not true. I am so pretty that my mistress is jealous, because I am prettier than she is. I am too pretty to fetch water."

So the negress broke her pitcher on the stone, and returned to her mistress, who was waiting for her.

"Where is the water," asked she, "that I told you to bring me?"

"I have broken the pitcher, because I am too pretty to carry water," replied the negress.

"You! Pretty!" said the lady, in astonishment. "Why, you are a perfect fright!" And the lady beat the poor negress, gave her another pitcher, and sent her back to the fountain weeping.

The negress returned slowly, and leant again over the water. She saw the same pretty face and said again, "Oh, how pretty I am! I am sure that I am the prettiest person in the world. I will not carry water for my mistress any longer!" So saying she broke the second pitcher and returned to the house without the water.

"Where is the water from the fountain, slave?" demanded her mistress.

"The water is in the fountain and the pitcher is broken," replied the negress. "I will not be your servant any longer. I am too pretty; I am pretty enough to marry a prince."

Then the mistress began to laugh and said, "How foolish you are, Lucy! You are a perfect fright. Go back to the fountain."

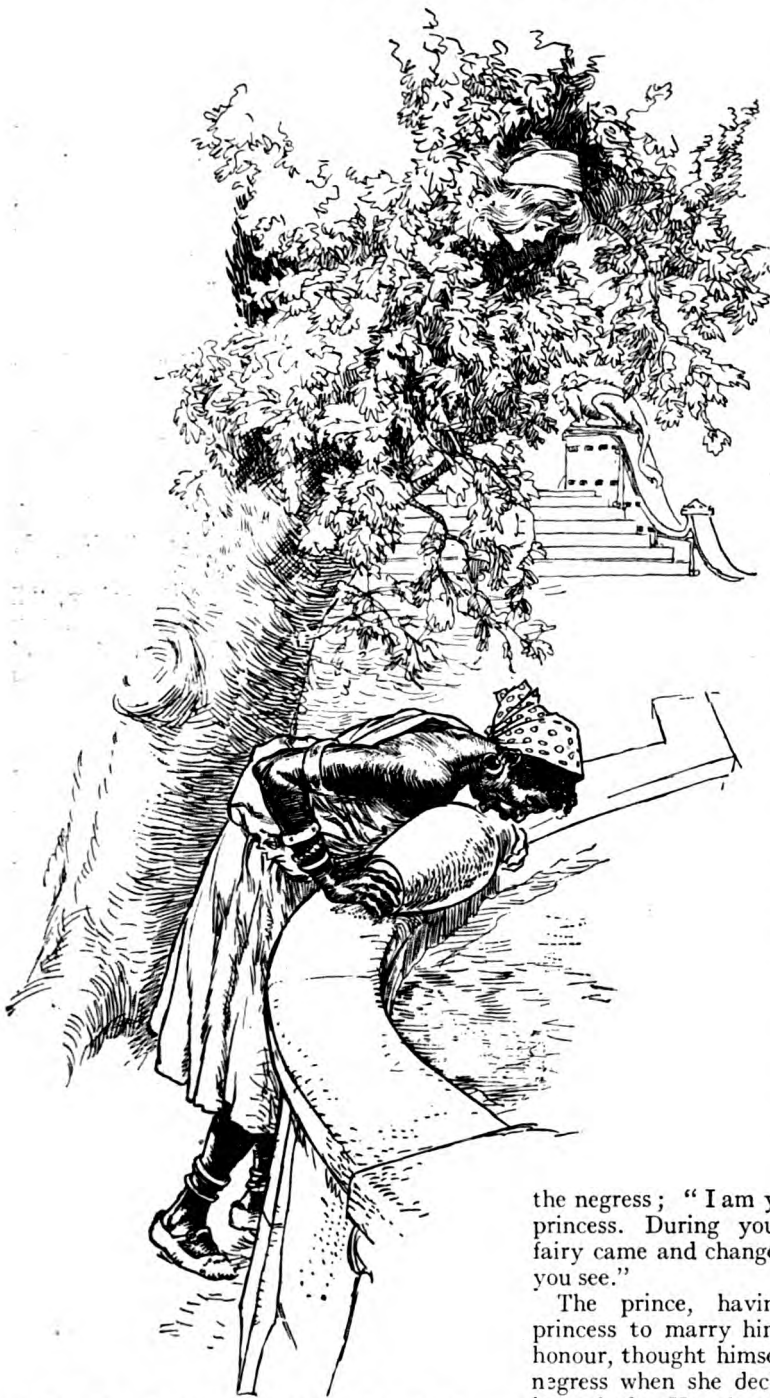
The negress took a third pitcher to the fountain and bent over the water. When she saw the pretty face reflected in the clear water she said again, "Oh, how pretty I am!" and this time she spoke so loud that the princess heard her and burst out laughing.

The negress looked up and saw the pretty princess. "Ah!" thought she, "this is the person who has caused all my misfortune. I will be revenged."

Then in a very sweet voice she said, "Pretty lady, why are you in that tree?"

"I am waiting for the prince, my betrothed, who has gone to his father's palace to bring me a white satin dress and a carriage," replied the princess.

"Pretty lady," said the negress, "your beautiful fair hair is in disorder. Will you



"'OH! HOW PRETTY I AM!' SHE SAID, GLEEFULLY. 'I AM AS PRETTY AS A PRINCESS.'"

allow me to climb into the tree and arrange it for you?"

The princess consented and the negress climbed into the tree. Then she took a large pin, with which she pierced the head of the princess, who uttered a terrible cry and disappeared. The negress, in surprise, looked up and saw a pretty white pigeon flying away and uttering plaintive cries. The negress then took the princess's place and awaited the return of the prince.

A few minutes later the prince arrived, accompanied by his suite, and cried, "Princess, my beautiful betrothed, where are you?"

"Here," replied the negress.

The prince ran eagerly to the tree, but what was his surprise and vexation to see the ugly negress instead of his charming betrothed!

"Where is the princess, my betrothed, a lady fair as the snow and beautiful as the dawn?" asked he.

"I am your betrothed," replied the negress; "I am your beautiful, beloved princess. During your absence a wicked fairy came and changed me into a negress, as you see."

The prince, having asked the pretty princess to marry him and being a man of honour, thought himself bound to marry the negress when she declared that she was his betrothed. He, therefore, helped her down from the tree and called the court ladies, who looked with disgust at their new mistress. The prince told them to dress the negress, so they robed her in white satin and put on the bridal veil, with a wreath of orange blossoms.

But the fine clothes only made the negress appear uglier than ever.

When her toilet was complete the prince led the negress to the carriage, handed her in, and they drove together to the palace.

Here the old king, who was anxious to see the beauty of his future daughter-in-law, received her at the gate. He looked in astonishment at the negress, then, turning to the prince, said angrily :—

" My son, are you mad ? You told me that the lady of your choice was beautiful, intelligent, and charming, and now you return with this ugly negress, who is a perfect fright." The king was so angry that he turned his back upon the pair and withdrew to his room, where he wept tears of rage.

The prince led the negress to the apartment which had been prepared for her, placed the palace and all the servants at her disposal, and told her that their marriage should take place on the following day.

Whilst the prince was with his father the negress, delighted to be able to command others, went everywhere in the palace, giving orders to all the servants, and at last reached the kitchen, where she ordered the cook to make some good things to eat.

Whilst she was giving this order a pretty white pigeon alighted on a tree which was close to the kitchen window and uttered a little, plaintive cry. The negress pointed out the pigeon to the cook and said :—

" Cook, take your largest knife, cut off that pigeon's head, and roast the bird for my supper."

The cook obeyed. He went into the garden and killed the pigeon. Three drops of blood fell on the ground and the cook carried the pigeon to the kitchen, to roast it for his new mistress.

The prince, who had quitted his father and had withdrawn to his room, happened to see the cook kill the white pigeon and noticed the three drops of blood which fell on the ground. Shortly after the cook had entered the house the prince observed three little plants sprouting from the spot where the three drops of pigeon's blood had fallen.

These little plants grew with such extraordinary rapidity that, in a few minutes, the prince saw with surprise they had become trees, laden with blossom. Soon the blossom disappeared and in its place were three fruits. Instantly these fruits ripened and the prince saw, with much surprise, that they were three oranges. He went into the garden and gathered the three oranges, then returned to his room and filled the golden cup with fresh water. Taking the silver knife in his hand he tremblingly cut the first orange, upon which the first princess appeared and asked for a drink.

But the prince said, " Oh, no, charming princess, it is not you whom I desire for my wife."

He cut the second orange, and when the second princess appeared he refused her a drink also. But when he cut the third orange, and the third princess appeared, he eagerly gave her a drink, and they remained joyfully together.

The pretty princess related all her adventures to the prince, who said that the negress should be punished.

The prince was so pleased to regain the pretty princess that he danced for joy, and the king, hearing the noise, appeared, angrily saying :—

" My son, you are certainly mad. Why do you dance ? "

" Oh, my father," replied the prince, " I dance for joy, because I have recovered my dear princess, the loveliest lady in the world."

So saying the prince presented the princess to his father, who looked at her in admiration, and said, " My son, you are right, the princess is very beautiful."

Then the king asked the prince how he had found the princess, and when he had heard the whole story he said that the negress was so wicked that she must be severely punished. Then the king took a long veil and threw it over the princess's head. He led her, thus disguised, into the large hall, where all the courtiers were assembled round the negress, who was wearing a pink satin dress, covered with pearls and diamonds.

The king advanced to the negress and said :—

" Madam, you think that to-morrow you will be the queen of this kingdom. Tell me what punishment would, in your opinion, be deserved by a person who should injure the future wife of my son, the prince ? "

" Such a person would deserve a terrible death," replied the negress. " She would deserve to be roasted alive in a furnace and her ashes strewn to the four winds."

" Madam," replied the king, " you have pronounced your own doom. Cruel woman, you desired to kill the pretty princess, my son's future wife. You, therefore, shall be roasted alive and your ashes shall be strewn to the winds."

Then the king raised the princess's veil, and all the court and the ladies-in-waiting exclaimed, " Oh, what a charming princess ! "

"THEN THE KING RAISED THE PRINCESS'S VEIL, AND ALL THE COURT AND THE LADIES-IN-WAITING EXCLAIMED, 'OH! WHAT A CHARMING PRINCESS!'"

The wretched negress threw herself on her knees before the king, imploring mercy. But he refused to pardon her.

Then the beautiful princess advanced, and said:—

"Your majesty, you have promised to give me a handsome wedding present. Grant me the life of this poor ignorant creature."

The king consented to grant the request of the princess, who found a good place for the negress, and everyone declared that the new queen was as good as she was beautiful.

The marriage of the prince and princess was celebrated the next day with much pomp and ceremony. The prince and princess lived happily all the rest of their lives, and died regretted by all their subjects.

Some Home-Made Weather-Tellers.

Written and Illustrated by

S. LEONARD BASTIN.

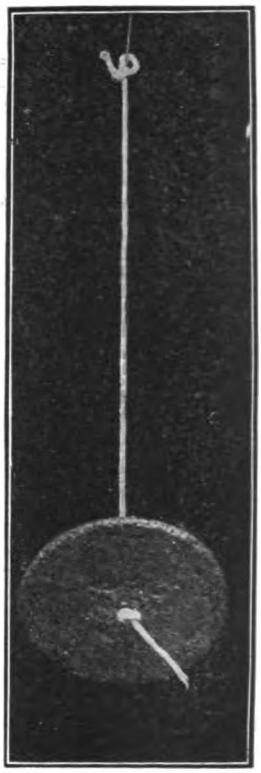


FIG. 1. — THE GINGER BISCUIT WEATHER-TELLER.

THE famous Dr. Abernethy is said to have been very fond of talking about a singular weather-teller which he had discovered. To make this, it is only necessary to secure a ginger biscuit, pierce a hole through the centre, and suspend it by means of a string (Fig. 1). When the weather conditions are likely to be fine and dry the biscuit is firm and inclined to be crisp. On the other hand, at the approach of rain it is limp and soft. The biscuit merely responds to variations in the amount of moisture in the atmosphere, and on this account is a reliable guide as to coming conditions.

A somewhat more elaborate device may be made with a pair of scales (the small kind used for weighing letters are the best) and a quantity of salt. It is a good plan to dry the salt well in the oven. The first step is to weigh an ounce of the salt so that this exactly balances with a weight. For convenience the salt may be put into a tin lid, as shown in the photograph (Fig. 2). It is easy to fix up a little indicator by cutting out a small cardboard arrow. This is pressed on to the bar, which turns as the scales swing backwards and forwards. Behind the arrow, on to the rigid portion of the scales, may be fixed a card. One half of this, that nearest to the salt, is labelled "Wet," and the other half "Dry." The workings of this scale weather-teller depend upon the principle that salt is extremely sensitive to the amount of moisture in the atmosphere, and as the amount of damp increases (as it is likely to do at the approach of rain) the following movement takes place. The damper the salt becomes the heavier it will be, and, as a consequence, the scale no longer balances. Thus the arrow-indicator is pulled over towards the section on the card which has been labelled "Wet." When the air gets drier the salt soon becomes lighter, and the scales adjust themselves, the arrow following suit.

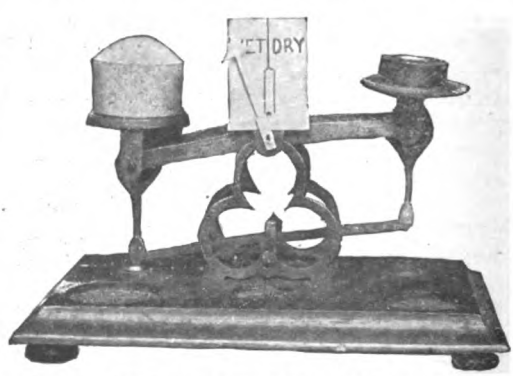


FIG. 2. — HOW SALT CAN BE MADE TO FORETELL THE WEATHER.

In an old book the writer came across the plummet weather-teller. This is very easy to fix up, and it is certainly interesting. The first step is to secure a piece of whipcord which is very dry. A plummet, or, for that matter, any weight, is fixed to the end of this, and the whole thing is attached to a nail on a wall. A card is prepared, across the centre of which a line is drawn. When

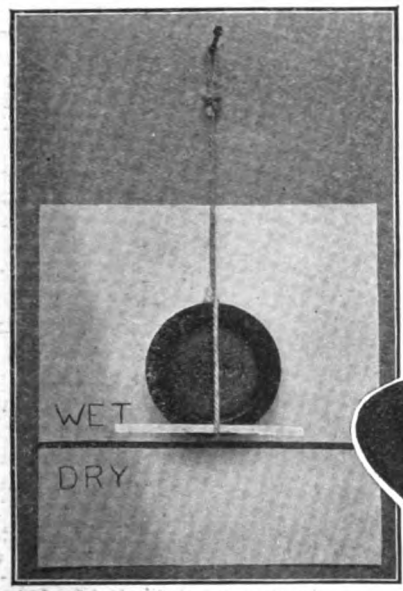


FIG. 3.—THE PLUMMET WEATHER-TELLER.

the weather is in a moderate state (neither very wet nor very dry) adjust the weight so that it exactly toes the line. If watched, it will be found that the weight rises or falls according to the state of the atmosphere. When the air is damp and rain is likely, the cord shrinks and the weight rises above the line (Fig. 3). The reverse happens when the conditions are likely to be dry.

What a convenient thing would be, if it were possible, a hat which would tell whether it was going to rain or not! Yet this is quite a simple thing to arrange. Indeed, a lady friend of the writer made a weather-hat by accident. The hat was an ordinary straw one, which had been badly burnt by the sun (Fig. 4). In order to clean it a mixture of lemon-juice and salt was used. This solution made the straw extraordinarily sensitive to variations in the amount of moisture in the atmosphere. When rain was coming the straw was damp to the touch, with a slight tendency to be limp; this was not sufficient to affect the usefulness of the hat, however. During dry conditions the straw felt crisp. The owner of this wonderful hat always knew whether it was needful to take an umbrella.

By the use of a simple solution of cobalt, gelatine, and water any man might fix up his hat with a weather indicator. The formula, which any chemist would prepare for a small sum, is on the following lines:—

Cobalt chloride	**1 part.**
Gelatine	**10 parts.**
Water	**100 parts.**

Cut out a small circle of cardboard, and soak this in the solution; then fasten to the inside of the hat (Fig. 5). It is easy to tell if rain is coming, by studying the colour of the disc; this alters according to the amount of moisture in the atmosphere. When rain is at hand the disc will be bright pink; in uncertain conditions it will be purple; whilst when the prospect is hopeful the cardboard will turn a sky-blue colour.

One might easily arrange a weather umbrella by sewing a small band of thick white cloth, such as felt, round the handle, after soaking the material in cobalt (Fig. 6). According to the changes in the colour of the substance it would be easy to discover whether it was necessary to take the umbrella with one or not.

A more elaborate weather-teller is one in which the cobalt solution is used in connection with

FIG 4. — A HAT THAT TELLS WHETHER IT IS GOING TO RAIN OR NOT.

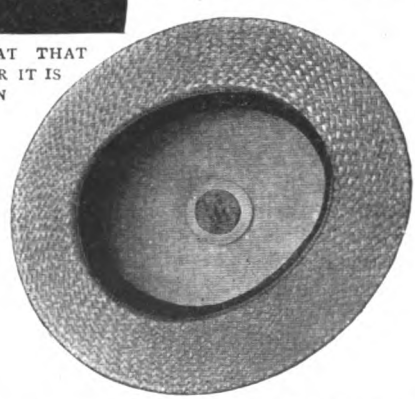


FIG. 5.—A WEATHER-INDICATOR INSIDE A HAT.

a bunch of paper flowers (Fig. 7). The artificial blossoms may be made on any lines out of ordinary tissue paper, though some of the

flowers should be made of white paper, others of pink, whilst a certain number of leaves of yellow paper are added. It is important to wire the flowers strongly on to stems made of wooden sticks. The blossoms and the leaves are treated with the cobalt solution. When rain is coming the weather bouquet looks very strange. Thus the flowers made of pink paper are a dull purple, those of white paper are pink, whilst the foliage is a weird shade of orange. With the coming of fair conditions the bouquet takes on quite an attractive appearance. The white paper blossoms become a brilliant blue, those made of pink paper a very fine violet, whilst the foliage is a clear green. Thus we may say that the flowers and foliage only look right when the weather is going to be fine.

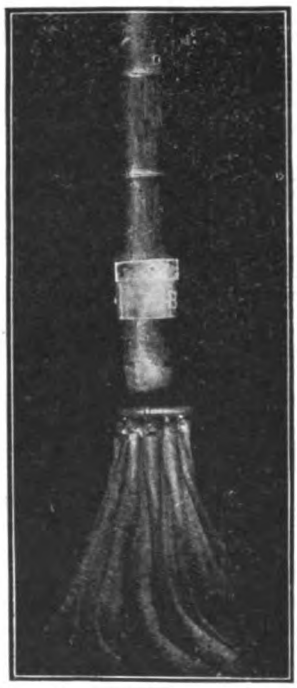


FIG. 6.—A WEATHER-TELLING UMBRELLA.

A still more complicated weather device, which, by the way, is perhaps the most interesting of all to make, is the weather-picture. To secure the right effect it is needful to follow the directions very closely; if attention is paid to details there is really no difficulty in making one of these contrivances. For the weather-picture it is needful to have three solutions made up. These are easy to secure from a chemist, and only an ounce or two of each would be needful for the preparation of the weather-picture. For the sake of reference the solutions are numbered:—

No. 1

Cobalt chloride	**1 part.**
Gelatine	**10 parts.**
Water	**100 parts.**

No. 2.

Cobalt chloride ...	**1 part.**
Gelatine	**10 parts.**
Nickel oxide ...	**75 parts.**
Cupric chloride ...	**25 parts.**
Water	**200 parts.**

No. 3.

Cupric chloride ...	**1 part.**
Gelatine	**10 parts.**
Water	**100 parts.**

It is supposed that the weather-picture is to take the form of a landscape as indicated in the illustration on the next page (Fig. 8). The first step is to secure a stout piece of cardboard; next obtain a sheet of white blotting-paper of exactly the same size. Upon the blotting-paper sketch out the view in strong outline. Thus one may work in houses, trees, fields, seas, and lakes. Only the essential features of the view should be put in, and the more "impressionist" the style the better. A good hard pencil is useful, so that sharp lines can be readily made. When the scene is complete cut out the different portions with scissors. As an experiment fit the parts of the picture together to see that the effect is all right.

Any absorbent material soaked in the solutions mentioned above will change colour in dry weather in the following manner. In the case of No. 1 the colour will be blue, that of No. 2 will be green, and that of No. 3 will be yellow. The different sections of the pictures must be treated with the solution according to what they represent. Thus the sky will be soaked with solution No. 1; the trees, the hedges, and the green fields with No. 2; and the houses, cornfields, and cliffs with No. 3. The various parts of

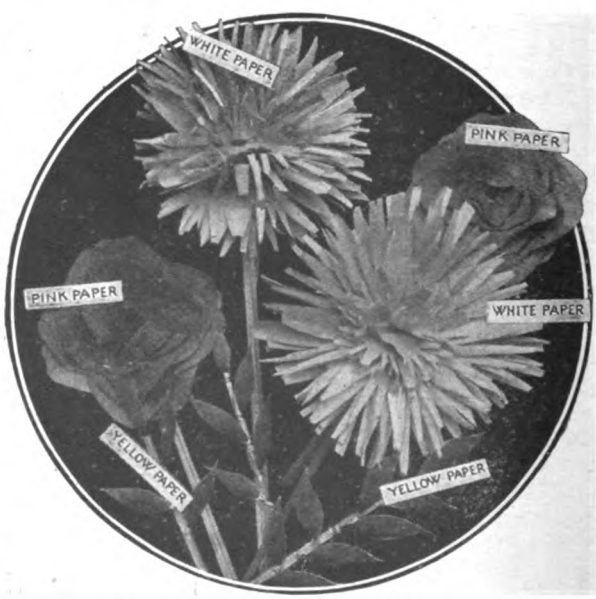


FIG. 7.—PAPER FLOWERS THAT FORETELL THE WEATHER.

the picture should be placed aside until they are fairly dry; then they are assembled on the sheet of stout cardboard, and fixed in place with strong glue. If desired the weather-picture may be framed, though it should not be covered in with glass, as this keeps away the air and prevents reliable working. During bad weather, or when a change to wet conditions is coming, the picture appears to be of a dull pink shade all over. When, however, the approach of dry, fine weather is at hand the different parts of the picture take on their proper colours. The sky is blue, the trees are green, and the houses are yellow. So that one may say that the weather-picture only looks right when the prospect is fair. These curious weather-tellers are really great novelties which always excite an immense amount of curiosity amongst one's friends.

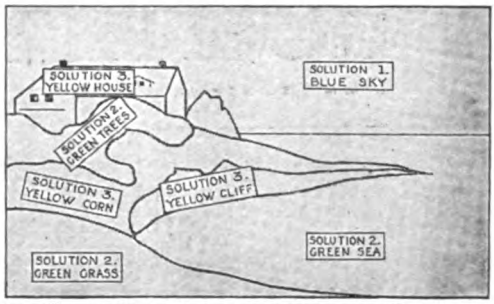


FIG. 8.—A PICTURE THAT IS SEEN IN ITS PROPER COLOURS ONLY WHEN THE WEATHER PROSPECTS ARE FAIR.

An old-fashioned weather-teller is known as the phial barometer (Fig. 9). To prepare this it is only necessary to cut off the rim of a narrow bottle holding about three ounces. This is readily accomplished with a file. Some arrangements must be made to hang the bottle upside down, and the best way is to loop a piece of string round it as shown in the picture. Now fill the bottle three parts full of water (of course, for this purpose, holding it right way up), and then, placing a finger over the mouth, reverse the position. When the finger is taken away the water does not pour out, as might be supposed; just what happens varies according to the state of the weather. When the conditions are likely to be fair the water remains just level with the neck of the bottle. On the approach of rain the water swells out until it may actually begin to fall from the bottle in drops. It is naturally a good plan to have a saucer underneath the phial barometer.

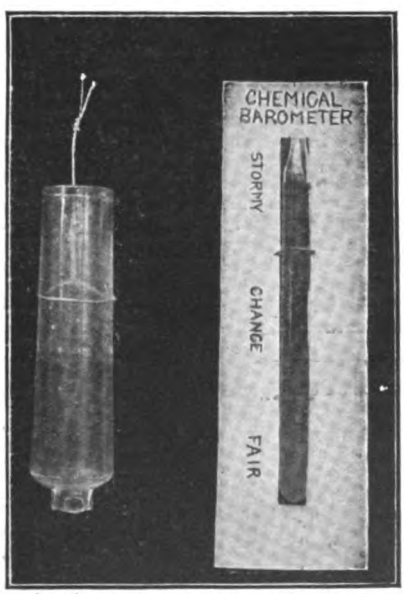


FIG. 9.—THE PHIAL BAROMETER.

Finally, the chemical barometer introduced by the great meteorologist, Admiral Fitzgerald, may be described. This is a pretty little contrivance, and one which gives interesting indications of coming weather. The needful mixture, which can be secured from any chemist, is as follows:—

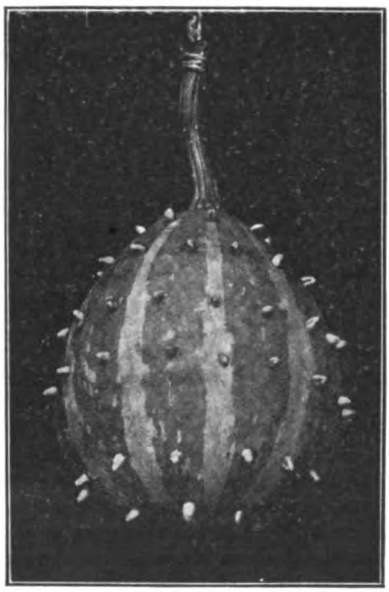
Camphor	... ...	**2½ drams.**
Alcohol	... ...	**11 drams.**
Water	... ...	**9 drams.**
Saltpetre	... ...	**38 grains.**
Sal ammoniac	...	**38 grains.**

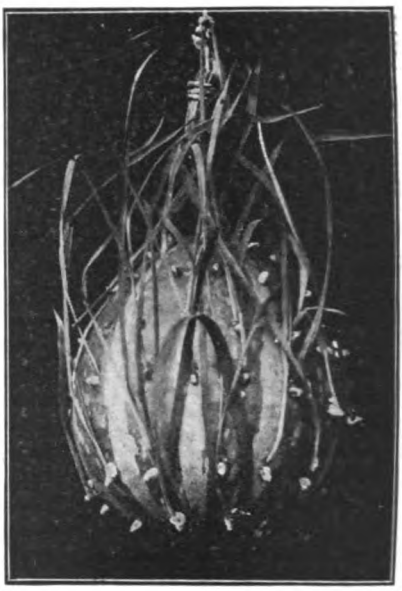
The camphor is dissolved in the alcohol and the salts in the water, and the two solutions are then mixed together. The mixture may be put into glass tubes or tall, narrow bottles. The opening should be drawn to a fine point after softening with heat, in which case a small hole must be punctured with a pin. On the other hand, the aperture may be covered in with a cork, through which a hole is bored with a red-hot needle. It is a good plan to mount the bottle or tube on a card. The indications of coming weather are to be found in a curious feathery substance which is formed by the camphor. In fine weather this matter remains at the lower part of the tube, and the upper portion of the liquid is clear. At the approach of rain the crystals start to rise up the tube, and tiny stars appear in the highest parts. When a great storm of wind and rain is coming the whole of the tube is crowded with a dense formation of crystals. The quarter from which the gale is coming will be indicated by the fact that the crystals lie most closely to this side of the glass. Altogether the chemical barometer is an exceedingly pretty contrivance, the growth of the feathery substance continually altering in appearance.

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

A GARDENING NOVELTY.





NOWADAYS all kinds of indoor gardening are very much in vogue. One of the prettiest ideas which has lately come under notice may be carried out with a vegetable marrow, a pumpkin, or even a cucumber. It is really better that the vegetable should not be quite fresh, and somewhat old marrows, as long as they have a little moisture in them, answer the purpose very well. From the nearest corn-shop procure a pennyworth of wheat or oats. Now, taking the grains one at a time, start to press these into the marrow, pushing each one through the skin of the vegetable until it looks like a hedgehog. Then, with a piece of string, arrange to hang the marrow up in a warm but airy position. For the first week or so it is a good plan to keep the marrow in rather a shady place. Sooner or later each little grain will start to grow, and when the young shoots appear it is well to move the vegetable into a light window. Every day turn the marrow round a little, so that all sides secure an equal amount of illumination. This is very important if a regular growth of the little plants is desired. In a warm room the grains will develop very rapidly, and quite soon the marrow will be covered with a mass of greenery as shown in the second illustration. No water will be required at any stage of the growth, as the small plants are able to flourish on the moisture which is present in the marrow. From this it will be seen that it would not do to employ a vegetable for this experiment which was in an entirely dry condition.—Mr. S. Leonard Bastin, Bournemouth.

SOLUTION TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLE.

HERE is the answer to the Diamond Puzzle given in our last issue :—

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                G
              G A S
            B O O T Y
          D A L L I E R
        G I R D   R A I L
      H I S T       R O A R
    P I A T           T R A P
      S N O B       D I R T
        T R I O   P U N Y
          T E N D I N G
            R U I N S
              S E T
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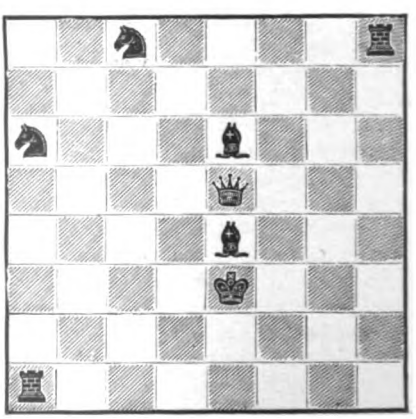
A CHESS CURIOSITY.

THE diagram below shows how eight pieces (king, queen, two rooks, two bishops, two knights) can be so placed as to command all the vacant squares on the board. In addition to this, all the pieces are supported except the king and queen, who need no support as they hold all their neighbouring squares, so that no piece can go next to them in safety. In short, the above position commands the entire board. I think this rather interesting, and it took me some time to discover it. Can any reader find another way to hold the board, not including obvious variations of the above? Of course, it should be remembered that all pieces, except the king and queen, must be supported.—Mr. A. R. Vine, 3, The Drive, Ilford, Essex.



"'WHY, LITTLE DAVID COPPERFIELD, I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN I SHOULD FIND YOU HERE!'"

(*See page* 365.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

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THE CANTERBURY CANDLESTICK.

AN OLD-FASHIONED BRASS AFFAIR—BUT QUITE ABLE TO SHED LIGHT ON A TANGLED LOVE STORY.

By

SYLVIA CHATFIELD BATES.

Illustrated by W. Hatherell, R.I.

IN Old Palace Street, as everybody knows, just where it winds around to the King's School gateway of Canterbury Cathedral, there is a row of little antique shops, dusty and delectable. Here you may find d'm, beautiful old things, jostled, maybe, by flagrant souvenirs, but unmistakably patrician. It is the place to go in search of what your antiquarian heart desires.

Miss Garland, who was not dim at all, but very brightly beautiful and herself distinguishable from imitations, sat in the bulging window of one of these shops, perfectly indifferent to the litter of andirons and old warming-pans. The shopkeeper—you could not help but think he had rusted a little himself—held up the candlestick for her admiration.

"Sorry, madam, but we 'aven't the pair. You can see for yourself it's a rare old thing. There'd be only the one other just like it, and that's lost. Friend of mine thought he saw it, the mate, down in Sussex once, but weren't sure. When I got there it was gone. Yes, madam, it was a disappointment."

The little man spoke with feeling, and set the candlestick almost reverently on a table before Miss Garland. She was a good customer, who understood.

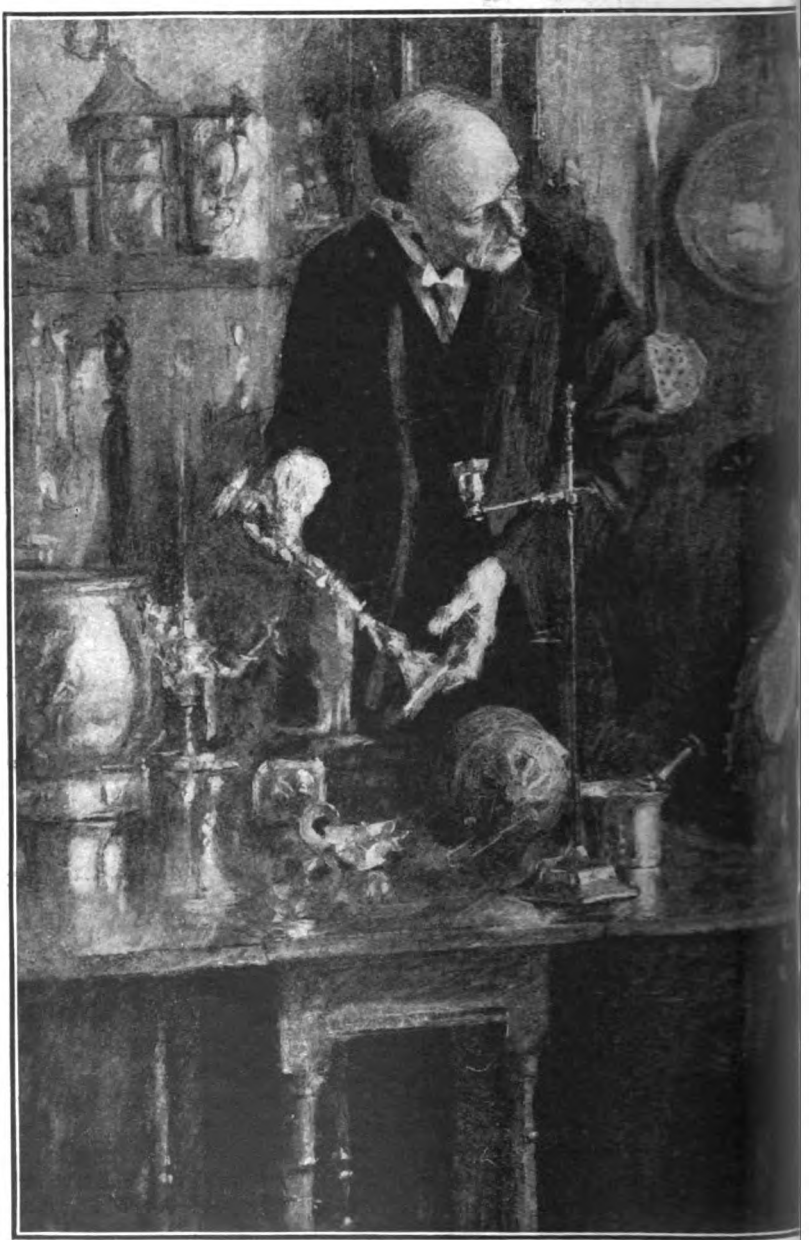
It was an exquisite thing. Rearing itself up on the mahogany table, an old battered candlestick of mellow brass, irregular yet graceful, with a wide, rectangular base and flaring lip, it looked what it was, one of a famous collection now scattered. Its period was probably Queen Anne.

"Rather different, you may say," remarked the shopkeeper.

Miss Garland regarded it smilingly, yet with one of her queer, beautiful looks. It

would have been hard to know what she was thinking. Mr. Geoffrey Bantock, now on his way back to America, could never have told. In fact, it was one of the looks of hers that most maddened him.

She had fallen in love with this eighteenth-century candlestick, and at first sight—a thing which only collectors and lovers understand. Of course, she had done that before. And her instinct was a true one, for she never had to change her mind. But there was something in this case that was different. It was not merely the wonderful colour, the graceful curves, the dents and scratches of the thing that were the fascination; there was something else. There was something that stirred in her heart and made her eyes meet the shopkeeper's quickly, that misted their clear gaze. With a touch of passion wholly disproportionate to the transaction she bought the candlestick, though she had come for a pair, and left the shop immediately. The rusty collector stared after her as she crossed the street toward the King's School gate.



"SHE HAD FALLEN IN LOVE WITH THIS EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CANDLESTICK."

It lacked a quarter of three of a still, sunny afternoon. A mellow drowsiness hung over the close and the cathedral. Three rooks sailed around the towers, unstartled by the bell. The old houses surrounding the Green Court, the top of the Deanery peeping over its walls, the Prior's Gate, the great trees, the stretch of green turf, all shared in the dreamlike repose. It was five months now since Miss Garland, being an impulsive American accustomed to gratifying her desires, had taken the house on the Brick Walk in the eastern end of the close and in the very shadow of the ruined arches of the priory. She had rented it in much the same way that she had bought the candlestick, because of a feeling. And there was David

STICK, AND AT FIRST SIGHT—A THING WHICH ONLY COLLECTORS AND UNDERSTAND."

Copperfield, too! Her cousin said she would collect or rent him if she could! He was a little boy. Miss Garland was even more foolish over little boys than over candlesticks and Elizabethan houses with brown old timbers and leaded windows. And he, too, had been acquired in a characteristic way.

It happened that the house on the Brick Walk which had been so fortunately to let was right across from the place where the real David Copperfield might have gone to school at Dr. Strong's. So perhaps it should have seemed natural enough that when she had come for the first time, key in hand, to enter the door of the house as her own, she should have found a little boy seated on the flat stone step; that he should have had serious brown eyes and brown hair with gold lights in it; that he should be about eight years old. Certainly it ought not to have surprised her when he looked up into her face and said gravely, with no introduction: "You are a very handsome woman, aren't you, ma'am?" Recognizing with delighted wonder the very words of David to Peggotty when they sat before the fire with the crocodile book, Miss Garland had gone down on her knees on the Brick Walk—she had beautiful ways, too—with her hands on the child's shoulders.

"Why, little David Copperfield," she had said, "I might have known I should find you here!"

He had only smiled at her name for him. It was the strangest thing that had ever happened to her that he was not surprised. He had slipped his hand into hers readily enough and entered the house. It turned out that he was a chorister of the cathedral and lived at school. But Miss Garland said his name was David and that he belonged to her. She told Cousin Augusta that this

was not nearly so dangerous as it would be to collect Mr. Geoffrey Bantock, or Herr von Holtz, or Jimmy Maxwell—according to advice.

The cathedral bell rang on in a rapid, singing way it had. The rooks continued to sail undisturbed. Miss Garland loitered and looked lovingly at the Norman Porch with certain delightful gables beyond it. But she thought about the candlestick that the rusty shopkeeper in Palace Street had sold her. What was it that it had seemed to mean there in the dim shop? It had stood up so bravely. Looking at the towers from which came the sweet bell tones, she was drawn by the quietness within as a place to think it over.

In the dim choir she found a seat in the stalls just before the choristers came in. The little boys pattering by her brought the look into Miss Garland's eyes that had been Mr. Bantock's despair. David came, most beautiful of all of them. He allowed her a little smile over the carved desk of the choir stall, after which he lifted his round chin and sang clearly that truly God was loving unto Israel, even unto such as are of a clean heart.

Then the meaning of the candlestick stood out. The emotion it had awakened in her was smoothing itself out for her to read and understand. It was closely connected with Mr. Bantock's journeying homeward, sore at heart! This worn old brass with its subdued gleam—over how many homely loves had it presided! It had handed on the sacred flame. She herself needed help to keep the flame bright. It had flickered lately; it might have gone out. Well, then, let the candlestick hold it up like a torch.

All the time she was watching David as he sang his prayers. He was usually restless, but to-day he twisted about and dropped his psalter twice, craning his neck almost excitedly, she thought.

After service she waited for him on the shadowy steps of the north-east transept. The passage-way was very still. She sat down on the steps, cupping her chin in her hands. If Mr. Bantock could have seen her he would have become tiresome again.

She was not sure when the man began to walk up and down the corridor. It was irritating of him to appear when she was waiting for David. His step, echoing in the vaulted roof, annoyed her. She rose, meaning to go for the little boy, who must have been delayed, when he came bursting from the doorway and down the steps. With flushed cheeks and flying hair the child brushed by her and dashed at the man. He was a tall man, and he was laughing.

"Mr. Tristram! Mr. Tristram!" David shouted. "I saw you at service. I knew you'd come back some day!"

"Heavens, Davy boy, how grown-up you are!" said the man, still laughing. "I told you not to grow up." He lifted the child high and kissed him.

Their voices made an astonishing clatter in the roof. It almost seemed as if they were going to ignore the lady on the steps. But she was absorbed in something else, a bewildering thought, and hardly noticed. They turned to her at last, however, and Miss Garland—who was brightly beautiful to men's despair—looked from the white-collared little boy up at the intruder. He was only a quick-smiling, red-haired man, perhaps nearing forty, whose rather thin face seemed to have been lined by many changing looks, who had a rare, gay, gentle but compelling presence to confront a woman.

"Here he is!" announced David. "Do you remember, Genia?" She had allowed him to call her that.

Miss Garland was thinking fast. Was this the man David had known a year ago, who was certainly related to Sir Tristram in the Round Table l ook?

"David always finds friends," the stranger was saying. "We both belong to him, I see."

He *had* said it. He had used her name for the child. He had called him David! What right had he to do that?

"David? David who?" she asked, rather coldly.

"Why, David Copperfield. Who else would look like this in Canterbury?"

The tall man slipped an arm around the boy, who was hopping on one foot in excitement.

"It's a s'prise!" the child shouted. "I never told, because I knew he'd come back. It's a s'prise for you, Genia!"

"But what does he mean?" inquired the man, looking over David's bobbing head in astonishment. "What is it that is so surprising?"

"That is my name for him," she answered, faintly; "David—David Copperfield, because I found him here in Canterbury Close, alone and—and small, looking up at the rooks. But it seems you thought of it—first!"

Then something queer happened. Slowly and somehow wonderfully these two people smiled together, while David gave a hand to each. It was a long moment which no one

hurried to end, one that she remembered—afterward.

"It was for a s'prise," repeated the little boy, more softly, "because I knew you'd come back some day."

"Yes," she echoed, and never knew she was lying, "we—we knew you'd come back!"

Presently they were strolling toward the Brick Walk, David between them. Looking up, he said, mysteriously, for her alone:—

"Ahem! Round Table book—*you* know. Don't you think so?"

She laughed, and the man seemed puzzled, but merrily so, as if he knew it was impossible to solve David anyway. He had not looked at Miss Garland after that first long smile.

And then, stopping before her house, Miss Garland asked them in, for it was nearly tea-time. When they were seated in the airy bay window of the small drawing-room that looked out on the east end of the cathedral, suddenly she was telling Mr. Tristram all about how she had taken the house and had found the little boy on the doorstep, and what he had said to her. She liked this man when he did not find it necessary to cap David's compliment with another.

Everything was very simple. What could be more so than bread and butter and tea, with afternoon sunshine chequered on the cloth, than stories of a little boy, a horse, a dog, and finally a bit of the sea and poetry, and the desert? There was a certain rare light touch of beauty in the strange man's talk, so that one wished that he would not stop. They made a long tea-hour of it in the quiet room, David listening earnestly, true to his name.

It was when Mr. Tristram, Mr. John Tristram, of London, rose to go that he spied Miss Garland's Jacobean rushlight holder that she had bought the week before of the rusty collector in Palace Street.

"You love these things, too!" he exclaimed. And sitting down again he told her about his old house in the county of Sussex, where there were things of a sort that she would like to see. The Jacobean holder of old steel was discoloured. Mr. Tristram knew of a better way to clean it, and when he asked to take it away with him to prove his point she found no objection. So it was half-past five when he and David went away hand in hand, with the holder in Mr. Tristram's pocket, and permission to come again.

Eugenia Garland had not shown the man her candlestick, though it would be natural to think he would be interested in it. Laying the unopened package in the table drawer, she sat by the window a good while, until the long twilight came, and thickened. She thought about the simple afternoon. Then by and by she went back to the table, took out the package, and, unwrapping it, disclosed the beautiful candlestick. It did stand up bravely, anyone could see that. It really did seem to bear a torch. Carrying it into a little inner room, she placed it on her desk, found a candle, and lighted it. Then she sat down there smiling. One of her queer, beautiful looks it was, that no man could understand.

The very next day as she was walking in the Green Court after breakfast she saw him again, accompanied by his collie Tim. A simple enough occurrence, truly, but suddenly of tremendous import. He cut across the grass to meet her, with the lightning smile she had decided could not be true. It had made David creep nearer, and shed peace all around. Miss Garland was not easily touched—poor Mr. Bantock and the others could bear witness—but now in the ancient court of Canterbury, than which nothing could be more conservative, the strangest things seemed possible, though she was only taking the hand of a man with an exquisite smile and red hair and actually, in the morning light, a few freckles. The fact that they should shake hands cordially on this second meeting seemed comical to them both. How remarkably easy it was to laugh together!

"I was bringing back the rush-holder," he explained. "Is a morning call excusable when it's a neighbourly errand?"

"Are we neighbours?"

"'It's a s'prise,'" he quoted. "I didn't tell you yesterday. Don't know why exactly."

He motioned to a little iron gate within the Norman Porch, beyond which were ivied gables and a garden.

"I am staying there with friends. It is where I first met—David."

She had nothing to say to this.

"Let me walk with you"—he broke the silence—"will you? I'll deliver the holder coming back."

They went out through the King's School gate and into crooked Palace Street. In the doorway of his shop the collector bowed to his good customer, but again she failed to speak of the important purchase.

In the sunny lanes beyond Canterbury they fell into talk. Eugenia thought there had never been such talk as his. One could have heard the like in the old days when conversation was still a cherished art. Mr. Bantock had bristled platitudes. Herr von Holtz wallowed in what he called sentiment. Jimmy

Maxwell knew no topic but golf, or automobiles, or bridge. But this man who had called David "David" first was simply and sincerely running on in a charming medley. And in it all there was a startlingly familiar vein. She had truly never heard the like before, yet somewhere she had known the counterpart. It was all sane and spontaneous and eagerly shared. This Mr. Tristram did not look young, but in enthusiasm he was no older than David. Miss Garland could laugh; she could be poignantly grave; she could respond with full chords to a fine and gentle touch. Moreover, her instinct was a true one. She never had to change her mind. At the end of the walk they were wonderfully acquainted.

As they came into the main street of the ancient town, after having, in deference to David the second, smiled over at Agnes Wickfield's house and at the inn where the Micawbers put up, Miss Garland remembered a book she had ordered in a tiny bookshop. Although the sky was rapidly clouding, they went in to make the purchase. And, of course, they loitered in the empty place. It was pleasant to find that for each it was impossible not to linger among books. They dipped into Kit Marlowe and Herrick, and an ancient *Spectator*. They read together a page of "The Child in the House," because it was so like David.

"These men were happier than most," suddenly he said to her. "They always had a safety-valve when things were hard or sad. They needn't be lonely. I suppose the same thing is true in any craft. Do you know the story of the bell-ringer of Kunststadt? May I tell it? He rang other men's bells all his life, until one day something in him took fire and he knew he must make his own chime. So he wrought his bells, and they were beautiful. The queer part was that the ringing of them had a mysterious influence—it set people to fashioning things with their hands or their minds. They were made noble by it. For it is a god-like thing to create."

Miss Garland looked up at him, flushing deeply as any schoolgirl.

"I know," she said, breathlessly, "I know *now* who you are."

"I'm no one," he laughed.

"You are pleased to say that, sir, but you have given yourself away."

She crossed over to a bookshelf and pointed to a row of little bright blue volumes, gold-banded.

"I've a row like that at home, only they are shabbier," she told him. "You are Tristram Dare!"

He looked very queer.

"But the bell-ringer didn't tell you. I haven't used him yet."

"He rang the last note," she smiled. "I have read all of the—celebrated Mr. Dare. And I have talked with you this morning. Do you think I don't know the real thing when I hear it?"

He looked queerer yet, if possible.

"And do you suppose there has ever been—you—to talk to before?"

She fingered the backs of the little blue books, grave now. "I read this one summer in Switzerland. I used to take it up to a seat above the lake, because it made me think of white peaks, somehow. And this one I read over and over the winter I had typhoid. It helped me get well. I always thought I should like to tell him—you, I mean—that it helped me get well. The last one I have read this year, and—and——" She stopped abruptly.

Then he spoke again in a low, steady tone in the quiet room:—

"I want you to know that I wrote them all—not exactly for you—but for—the soul of you."

With a startled glance she walked to the window.

"It—it is beginning to rain," she said.

There was a pause, during which the window-panes began to trickle water.

"And we haven't an umbrella," Mr. Tristram stated, with satisfaction.

They sat down and quietly watched the drenched street. The bookseller had long since retired to his back room to doze over black-letter, which happened to be *his* hobby. Miss Garland was a good customer here, too.

They seemed to like the quiet and not to care to talk any more. Once Eugenia said, guiltily, "We could telephone to David to bring an umbrella."

"Would you get the child out in this downpour?" he asked, severely.

Was it possible that they both feared the bookseller would offer to lend them that huge affair behind the door? They pretended not to see it at all. If the bookseller had thoughts of any such kindness he concealed them, being a student of something else besides black-letter.

But as every rain slackens, this one did. They left the shop finally in a soft mist, and almost immediately, so it seemed, reached the pilgrim gateway, passing under into the close.

At her doorway Mr. Tristram stood with bared head. He seemed about to say

something, perhaps like what he had dared in the bookshop, and to wish to say it lightly. He smiled in such a friendly way that her eyes gave him permission.

And after this he hurried away.

Going up the stairs Eugenia laughed a little. For he had forgotten to return the Jacobean rushlight holder after all.

The days glided goldenly, while life in Canterbury Close was matchless in its serenity. He had said he could not stay long in Canterbury, but he remained a month, at the end of which he became subtly different.

The difference dated from the morning when in the Green Court she saw him receive a letter. It was a large, square, thick, crested letter, somehow imposing to behold. He smiled when it was handed to him and looked a bit taken aback by its size.

"This is from a good lady," he explained, "who unfortunately has literary aspirations. She is the mother of—of a dear friend of mine."

"Oh!" said Eugenia, wondering why he told her that, except that by this time he was telling her everything. But she had not heard of this lady before, nor of the dear friend, her child.

"Is she writing a novel?" she asked him.

"No. I think she prefers to stage them—in real life."

He put the letter into his pocket and they started on their walk. Nor did he refer again to the literary person, or to any member of her family. But after that morning Miss Garland could see a difference. From that time it was that he began to look worried and tired, and older than she had thought him.

One morning, soon after this, Eugenia was reading in her garden. It was a small garden, secluded and sweet, upon which the pointed gables of her house looked peacefully. In it there was a sundial which read: "*Horas non numero nisi serenas*," and so far the legend had proven true. Her book was one that she had heard Mr. Tristram mention. "The sundial alone is worthy to measure the splendour of the months of green and gold," she read. . . . "Like profound happiness it speaks no word. Time passes over it in silence. . . ."

Beyond the hedge by which she sat, and which separated her garden from the lawns of the Deanery, she suddenly heard voices. They belonged to Mr. Tristram and David, and they were speaking her name. She was going to jump up to surprise them, but in an instant she heard something that kept her still a moment too long. Then, to her despair, they sat down back to back with her, the hedge between. Escape was impossible now.

"Yes," David was saying. "I remember her very well. We used to call her the Nice Girl. Do you think Genia will like her?"

The man made a queer sound between a laugh and a groan. He spoke with would-be lightness, one could tell, smilingly.

"Of course, David, you don't understand, but—once I was going to ask her to marry me. I went back last year to do that, little boy, because—— Well, there wasn't anyone else, and I'm not young, Davy, and she is a—nice girl. You're such a grown-up youngster I believe I'm telling you all about it! You see, I wanted a little chap like you, a son. But although I saw a good deal of—the—Nice Girl, hoping, you see, that she would turn out to be—the one, she didn't. And I didn't ask her. Something held me back."

"I am very glad of that," remarked David.

"And now it seems—she thought things, her mother says. I have had a letter from her mother, who has been anxious for—the marriage. I must have committed myself. You don't know what that means, boy, but you do understand this: The girl is ill. She is a good little thing. So I am going back, Davy, just as—as soon as I can."

There followed a long silence in both gardens. Then the man and the boy moved off across the grass. The sun shone just as brightly on the dial, marking off the words, "*Horas serenas*."

So she was a nice, good little thing! And she was sick for John Tristram. Suddenly Eugenia's eyes were full of tears. One could not hate her very long, just for that.

It had become a habit for Mr. Tristram and David to come to the house on the Brick Walk for tea, which was drunk either in the drawing-room or in the garden. That afternoon Miss Garland ordered it out of doors.

She was pale when she greeted them. After one look at her, Mr. Tristram began to talk fast about such queer things that David stared. Then suddenly, as if he had said everything he could think of, he became silent. The little boy, having been permitted to finish all the cakes, retired to the top of the high wall, where he walked about in dizzy places unreproved.

Eugenia Garland was brave. She looked, smiling, straight at the man who had no

more words to-day out of all his brilliant store. When she turned her face upon him he looked away, as from too bright a light.

"How long shall you be in Canterbury?" she said, quietly. She actually wished to help him. "You came for a short visit. Is it nearly time now for you to go back?"

Their eyes met as on the first day, only now there was no smile between them. Hers faded in the long moment.

"Do you want me to go?" he asked.

And at that moment David fell off the wall. He was scrambling up laughing before they reached him, absolutely unhurt and indignant at their many questions.

"I've fallen twice as far as that and only skinned my knee," he boasted.

"I think I had better go—at once," said Mr. Tristram. She spared him the explanation that he did not refer to the termination of his call.

"Oh," cried David, "not before we go down to the sea!"

She smiled again, now faintly, at the way the man and the boy were blundering it. Did they suppose all this would be plain if she had not sat behind the hedge?

"We must not break our promise to—to David." She straightened the wide white collar and smoothed the boy's hair, while Mr. Tristram unexpectedly turned away.

"I think we had better take—David—down to the sea, perhaps to-morrow?" She addressed the back of the tall man's coat. "And after that you will be—going."

They had intended to make the little journey to show David the boats, but Miss Garland had known that it was the man who wanted to see them. She wanted to see them herself now. For it might not be very long before she sailed away in one and never came back.

So they rattled and jerked through the still country, as blue and yellow and green and scarlet as Kent can be in August. The grain-fields were ripe and dotted with poppies, and blue corn-flowers that matched the sky. Reapers had begun their work.

He did not look at her very much to-day, nor smile, except at David. When he did that her breath caught. The little boy returned the smile, his eyes big with the trust placed in him, but with a puzzled look of worry. No one said anything about this being the last day.

But when they reached the sea and had found a place by it, Mr. Tristram changed quickly. He seemed bent on making this pale Miss Garland laugh. He forgot entirely that he was grown up—at least David said so—and they did beautiful games together. Later he read aloud out of a little scarlet book. Eugenia remembered to the end of her life that the book was scarlet and all about something happy, but what she did not know. The only real thing besides the brilliant colour was Mr. Tristram's voice going on and on in a beautiful, comforting way, and the surf with its deep harmony, and a little boy's head against her arm.

Twice they saw an ocean liner far out in the Channel creep by, with its trail of smoke off at one side, headed for the open sea. Each time she meant to tell them how it would not be long, now, before she steamed away like that. And each time she did not tell them.

The day was spent very simply. There was the luncheon on the shore. There was the long walk after it in search of just the country inn for tea. There was tea at the inn by the window, with the lattice standing wide to let in the scented air. Then there was the journey home in the early evening, whose mellow light slowly died into dusk. It was a wonderful day, and no one once said it was the last.

They returned to the shadowy close, to the house on the Brick Walk. Mr. Tristram came in to say good-bye, leaving David sitting on the flat stone where Miss Garland had first found him.

The small drawing-room was dark, but hearing her mistress's voice a maid brought lights. Miss Garland left the man standing silent in the middle of the room while she went away to remove her hat and gloves. She passed through the little inner room, and stopping before her desk impulsively set alight the tall candle in the old candlestick.

When she came back he stood before it with the queerest of all his expressions on his unusual face. One could not read it, this wondering, eager, tragic, humble look. And through it he smiled down at her. Being brave as well as beautiful, Miss Garland smiled back at this man she had known a month.

"You burn it before 'Fortitude,'" he said, abruptly, referring to the copy of Botticelli's painting above the desk.

"Yes, I love the picture," she answered, quietly.

"I should know you would. You, too, are intelligent and brave—and sweet. You would understand a man if, when he felt he was perhaps mistaken, he could not take advantage of that, because he knew he wanted to

"AN OLD, BATTERED CANDLESTICK OF MELLOW BRASS, IRREGULAR, GRACEFUL, PATRICIAN; BY THE LOOK OF IT ONE OF A DISTINGUISHED COLLECTION NOW SCATTERED IN STRANGE PLACES."

be mistaken! But this must be all blind gibberish to you. Forgive me."

"I—hope—I could understand."

"Do you think you could forgive me?"

"It isn't a question of that," she told him.

"I can't expect you to know what I mean. I don't half know myself. But—I shouldn't be leaving you, I suppose, if my ancestors hadn't died for their—honour."

"Oh, the poor little thing!" whispered Eugenia Garland, but the man did not hear her.

"I must go quickly now. Take care of—of David, will you? Good-bye!"

"Good-bye!" And then she added, regardless of being intelligible to him: "You see it is a tall candle. It will burn a long while."

Then he left her alone in the empty room.

The next night, a rainy evening, Eugenia sat in her little inner room alone except for David—David Copperfield, who lay asleep on the couch. Cousin Augusta had gone early to bed. Now that the time was so short Eugenia kept the little boy with her almost constantly, for the schoolmaster's good wife did not object. She sat before her desk, upon which stood the candlestick, its taper burning clearly. Her face had the look of one who on a dark night holds up a torch.

The rain fell with uninterrupted, drenching dreariness as the hours slipped by. The sound had not been dreary once, in a tiny bookshop where a big umbrella stood behind the door. But the yellow flame tried to cheer and soften all the room; it fairly caressed the pretty child curled on the couch. Suddenly it flared strongly and almost went out. From below came the sound of the front door slammed against the gusty wind.

Presently she heard a step in the drawing-room and a low voice calling. She could not move very well, for it was John Tristram's voice. So she sat still and let him come into the little inner room, and into the candlelight. He stood before her, dearly, infinitely familiar. But he looked pale to-night and somewhat tired, though glad.

"I made them let me come up alone," he explained. "I've come back."

Miss Garland clasped her fine white hands on the edge of the desk.

"I want to tell you—that I know all about her. I was behind the hedge that day; I couldn't get away in time."

"That was why you—almost—sent me away?"

"You had made a mistake," said Eugenia Garland, "and—and somebody else was the one to suffer."

He hesitated, then began to speak quietly.

"Let me tell you about it. You're right; I made a mistake. And to improve matters I thought it honourable to risk eternal misery for two people. But I couldn't do it. For the second time I couldn't be—untrue. I had almost reached her house when I saw how cruel it would be. So I turned back and decided to write her—the truth.

"But I didn't come straight back to Canterbury. I branched off down into Sussex. I had a reason. And on that train I met her cousin. It was all down in the stars, I think. She hadn't thought these things at all. It was only her mother. For—she's a nice girl, you know. She has been engaged for a month in secret to a younger man, to the Honourable Wilfred Marleydown. She aspired high, thank God!"

John Tristram was laughing. It made him look so young that Eugenia loved to see him laugh.

He moved a little nearer her desk and examined the candlestick, smiling inscrutably, with the look she had once thought could not be true. Then he disappeared into the drawing-room, and quietly coming back began to fumble with a paper package.

"I went down to my home in Sussex because I had something there for you. I found it once years ago in a dusty little shop in a rattly little town. And I had given it a place of honour, too."

He unrolled the paper, and as she looked up, wondering, held out to her—an old, battered candlestick of mellow brass, irregular, graceful, patrician; by the look of it one of a distinguished collection now scattered in strange places. Its period was probably Queen Anne. He set it on her desk, and it was line for line the mate of her own.

David Copperfield breathed deeply, sighed and smiled in his sleep. The man spoke again softly.

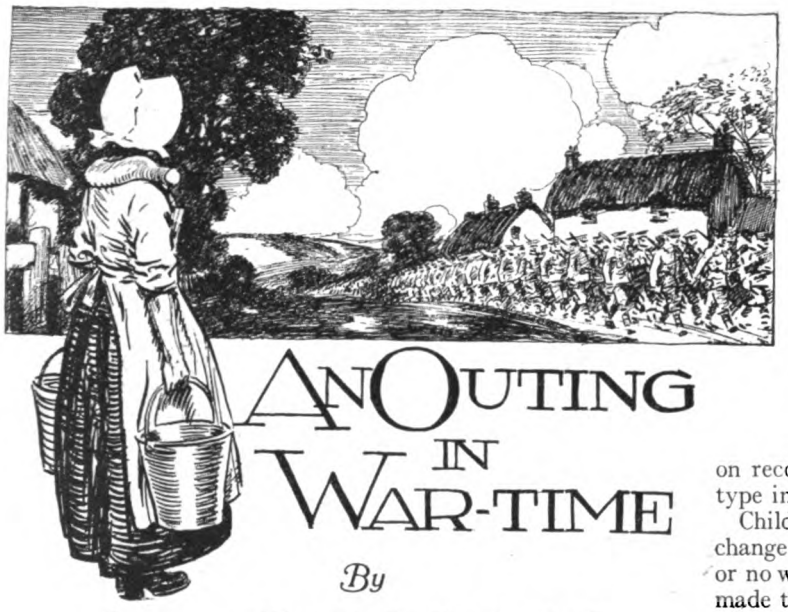
"When I recognized yours here last night I knew dimly—I began to understand. It seems like a miracle. It has all been a miracle. But, after all, it is only because we three were true to something. One can't say exactly what."

He took her beautiful face in his hands.

"Dearest," he said, and there was all the glory of a dream in the little room, "I think I've loved you all my life. And—and—I felt to-night that I was coming—home."

Presently they saw that the little boy they had both named David was sitting up straight and tousled on the couch.

"Oh, Mr. Tristram," he was saying, sleepily, "let me kiss her, too!"



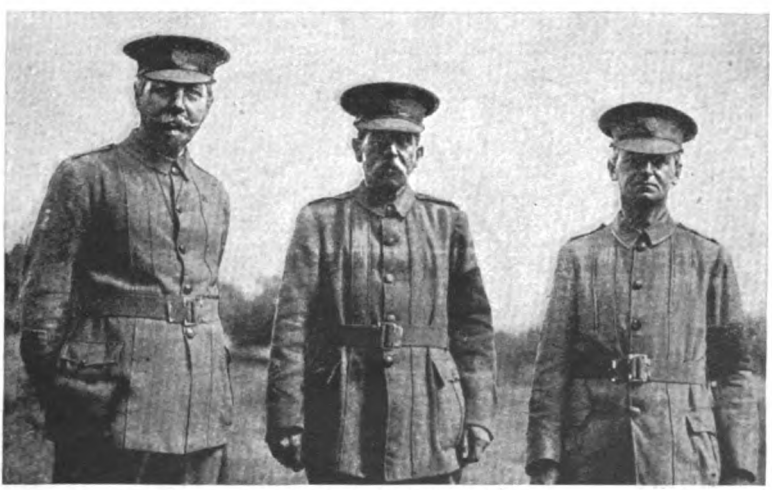
AN OUTING IN WAR-TIME

By

A. CONAN DOYLE.

I CAN well imagine that the day will come when our descendants will read with interest some details of how the War in this summer of 1915 affected the quiet country life of southern England—that life of immemorial placidity where time passes so sedately to the gentle murmur of the breeze among the grasses and the bees upon the clover. It is a life so mellow and so gently peaceful that it might well have seemed in this island home to be beyond any caprice of Fate. And yet here we are stirred to our depths, every rule of conduct altered, every object of desire changed, with fiercer joys and sharper pains, and all our hearts in Flanders. It is good, no doubt, and it is very strange, though it has come upon us so gradually in these last eleven months that perhaps we hardly appreciate how topsy-turvy it has all become. One day set faithfully on record may serve as a type in years to come.

Children must have a change once in a while, war or no war, and the heat has made the little faces white and weary of late. Whither shall we take them? Someone had mentioned Hayling Island. It is a hundred miles away, but my wife and I will be better for a complete break of thought. Too long have we been waiting for that which never comes, living during the night for the morning papers, living during the day for the evening one. It is a morbid state. One long



"THREE MUSKETEERS."

THE CROWBOROUGH VOLUNTEER CORPS IS THE FIRST IN DATE IN GREAT BRITAIN, HAVING BEEN ENROLLED UPON AUGUST 4TH, 1914. THESE ARE THREE ORIGINAL MEMBERS—FROM THE LEFT, SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, HON. REGINALD BROUGHAM, H. E. SHEPPARD, J.P.

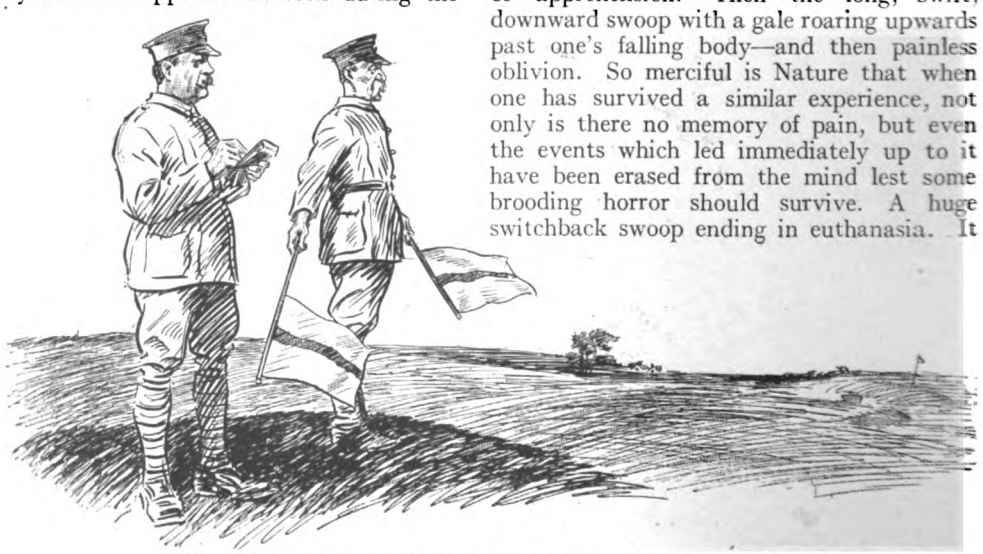
Copyright, 1915, by A. Conan Doyle.

day we shall have in the open to Hayling and back in search of rooms. The motor is ordered for twelve.

I am down at eight and walk among the flowers before breakfast. Hark to that sound breaking in upon the peace of this sweet summer morning! It is very faint and very far, and yet with a deep throb in it which tells of infinite power. There it is again, rising a little and then falling, like a thunderous surge upon a distant beach. There is no doubt at all about the sound. It is that of the guns in Flanders. It is a hundred and twenty miles as the crow flies, and it might well have appeared incredible, but you have also to remember that we are seven hundred feet high and that there is a very steady easterly wind. Some miracle has put those air-currents just right, and we do actually hear the guns of the great long-drawn battle. For a week now, ever since the wind has been in that quarter, we have heard it. All this section of Sussex is talking of it. It brings it all very close, and when we volunteers muster of an evening for our drill, it helps to give actuality to the eternal "Upon the left form line of platoons!" or "Wheel to the right by sections!" when we hear the far-off roar of the whirlpool which has drawn in so much, and may yet draw in ourselves if we should be thought worthy. One can spring to attention with a sharper snap when the guns of Flanders are pulsing in one's ears.

Everybody is smiling this morning over a story that a Zeppelin was seen during the night near Tunbridge Wells. It is unlikely, but they all seem to believe it. These Zeppelin yarns have been a great boon to the country, bringing a little harmless excitement into the Sleepy Hollows. Here and there, no doubt, the machines have done a little damage, but if you put it all together it would not amount to that which is caused by a single large accident in peace time. Half-a-dozen able-bodied Suffragettes would cause more damage to property than all the Zeppelins that have ever come out of Germany. When one considers, on the other hand, that several of them have been destroyed, and that in one case—that of Warneford—twenty-eight of the crew were dashed to pieces, it seems to me that Germany's air fleet has up to date made as bad a bargain as her water fleet did when it killed two hundred civilians in Hartlepool, Scarborough, and Whitby, but lost the *Blucher* with eight hundred men in endeavouring to repeat the glorious exploit. It is wiser as well as better to play the game.

Another story has just come in at which no one will smile. One of our aviators has fallen at Cross-in-Hand, five miles to the south. The accident, whatever it may have been, occurred high above the clouds. He fell like a stone for two thousand feet or more. What a terrible, and yet, on second thoughts, what an enviable end! One can picture it—the sudden snap which showed that something had broken, the peremptory death call coming so quickly that the soul had hardly time for one flutter of apprehension. Then the long, swift, downward swoop with a gale roaring upwards past one's falling body—and then painless oblivion. So merciful is Nature that when one has survived a similar experience, not only is there no memory of pain, but even the events which led immediately up to it have been erased from the mind lest some brooding horror should survive. A huge switchback swoop ending in euthanasia. It



"SENDING MESSAGES FROM OUTPOST ONE TO OUTPOST TWO, WHOSE FRANTIC

is only terrible to the bystander who gathers the shattered frame. The man himself knows nothing.

Breakfast is over, and here comes the first task of the day—a curious example of topsy-turvydom, yet now accepted as a matter of course. For an hour and a half we are doing semaphore and Morse upon the common. Could there a year ago have been in this world a less likely thing than that I, a middle-aged civilian with no knowledge of such work, should be spending my morning with a magistrate, an architect, and another in sending messages from Outpost One to Outpost Two, whose frantic little flags are wagging away at the far end of the golf course? Collectively, we are the signal section of the local company. Our peace of mind is blighted by the trick of one of our distant senders, who will drop his semaphore flag on the A and the G until it is blended with the other flag which he holds between his legs. We flap reproaches at him, but he is incorrigible. Still, it is all good work, and every lesson counts. At twelve I am back at home, and the motor speeds upon its way.

In this little Sussex village we have ten thousand men—the 1st Lancashire Reserve Division of Territorials. Their khaki figures are everywhere—smallish men, as one would expect from the great manufacturing cities—but sharp and tough. They are Manchester for the most part, and they talk with a burr like a motor-cycle. What a change this glorious countryside must be to them, and what visions of the heather-clad south they will bear back to the dark streets of the busy north! All their lives these days will come back to them in their dreams. Their comrades are in the Dardanelles, and they send constant drafts to them. Many a Manchester lad has already laid down his life between Krithia and the sea in the desperate venture of the last crusade.

Great Britain is one huge barracks, or like an Imperial military exhibition with samples strewn over the country. The oddest people are found in the oddest places. I remember at Edinburgh Castle seeing a hard-bitten regiment drilling admirably with "N.D." upon their shoulder-straps. I was unable to fit them into any conceivable type of Northumberland men. They proved on inquiry to be Newfoundlanders, fishers off the cod-banks many of them, who had taken up their rifles for the common cause. So here in the little village of Maresfield, just four miles on our way, one is aware of long, slab-sided fellows with Stetson hats, which give their nationality. They are Colonel Panet's Canadian Horse Artillery, eating their hearts out because the cavalry have gone and they have been held back. All the charms of the dear old rose-embowered village, with its Norman church and famous Shelley manor-house, are as nothing to these fellows in their longing for the trenches of Flanders. Beside them are three regiments of English yeomanry of the Home Counties—all eagerly waiting. Uckfield, the next village, is full of sun-burned infantry, and so is Lewes. Outside the ancient gate of the Norman castle there are swarms of them, and one can see them exercising on the long slope of the down where, just six hundred and fifty years ago, Simon de Montfort drove the King's army headlong down into the town, and gave young Edward his first bitter taste of war. One notes as one passes that outside the police-stations are hung placards with types of aeroplanes upon them, that one may distinguish friend from foe. One would think that by their deeds one might know them.

We break away before we enter Brighton and take the back road, which proves to have every possible disadvantage—bad going, and most uninteresting and hideous. The monotony of the journey is broken only by a long wooden bridge which assures us, upon a placard, that, while we have to pay sixpence to pass over, the authorities will not guarantee, or hold themselves responsible for, our safe arrival upon the other side. On the right is Lancing School, perched upon its

LITTLE FLAGS ARE WAGGING AWAY AT THE FAR END OF THE GOLF COURSE."

height. The sight of it saddens us, for it reminds us of a brave lad fresh from it wounded in his first battle and killed in his second over yonder in Flanders. What have the public schools not done for Britain in this war! We had vamped up a great army —an army which surely is one of the wonders of the world, for every man is a pure volunteer without even the temptation of a bounty, and yet the total is greater than that of the armies of North and South together in the great American War. But one thing was vital and apparently impossible. Where were we to get the officers for millions of men?

"HE WAS IN FLANNELS, A STRAW HAT WITH FREE FORESTER RIBBON UPON HIS HEAD, HIS ARM IN A SLING, AND HIS CIGARETTE IN HIS LEFT HAND."

An officer is born, not made. In Prussia they had them in their thousands by hereditary caste. Where could we find them in our democratic country? And then in an instant they appeared, this endless stream of dear, eager boys from the public schools, trained to unquestioning obedience upon the one side and to enforcing discipline upon the other. They came in hundreds and in thousands, these glorious lads, filling the gaps in the regulars and furnishing the subalterns for the new formations. "There never was such a grand chance for the public schools," wrote one of them, now lying buried in his trench at Ypres. In some schools I am told that more than eighty per cent. of those available went to the Front. They saved England, for they supplied what she sorely needed, and could have found in no other way. The men loved them. "They would have followed them, singing, into hell." I will always carry in my remembrance a chance meeting and chat in a railway-carriage with one of these boys—a boy with the hard, quick eyes of a man. He was in flannels, a straw hat with Free Forester ribbon upon his head, his arm in a sling, his cigarette in his left hand, his brown, earnest face thrust forward, and his talk of sandbags and saps, and above all of the splendour of his men. How often in the last twenty years have I contended that Britain is neither degenerate nor weakening, and that her history lies in the future rather than in the past! These youngsters will carry on the best that the race can give.

We have our lunch at Broadwater in one of those unpretentious English hostelries which are often so much better than they look. Then on through Arundel, with the glorious modern castle upon the right, and past Chichester, Emsworth, and Havant, until we reach Hayling about four o'clock in the afternoon. The war still pursues us. On the shingly beach a hundred young officers are having a course of musketry. The place resounds with words of command and the snapping of triggers. Out to sea we can see upon the right the forts of Spithead, and in front of us a low, squat, sea-bully of a battleship, making her way eastwards, with a lean torpedo-boat gliding upon either quarter. It is a calm day, and we look anxiously over the smooth water for a periscope—the dorsal fin of the deadliest of sharks. I have seen, when I was in the Arctic, a creature which lived upon sharks. Is it possible that these sharks also have such a master? "Success of our submarines!" One sees the phrase in many of the ignorant German papers. May it, perhaps, be preserved as one of the grimmest and most sardonic jokes of history. Well, they were given the dirtiest task that ever fighting seamen undertook. If their own fate is sometimes hard, what about the North Sea fishermen whom they murdered in such cold blood with their shell-fire. Such deeds were never done in war before. On land and sea the Germans have always fought foul—it is sad that such a reproach will for ever rest upon a brave people.

Our business done, we are speeding back, taking the coast road this time. Submarines or no, one has only to glance seawards to be sure that our trade has not been seriously affected. This so-called blockade began on February 18th. It is now July 10th, and the Channel is still dotted with our merchant

ships. There seem to me to be more than in peace time, but many of these are bound, no doubt, for Flanders. What risk and what expense would have been saved had we built our Channel tunnel in time! It transcends the story of the Suez Canal as an example of our national slow-wittedness. It is lucky that we have other qualities that atone. But our descendants will pay good hard cash for many a long year to atone for this particular piece of absurdity.

Here is a great sight as we approach Brighton. There is an aerodrome by the sea, and four great biplanes are swinging and swooping above it. May they soon be above Essen! There is the central ganglion of the whole German system. Paralyze that, and the huge fierce body lies inert. It is a long flight, no doubt—a good two hundred miles as I reckon it from the nearest friendly post—and yet surely it can be done. There are plenty of men who would go, even if they *knew* they would never come back. For it is the one operation of war which, if done on a sufficient scale, would indeed be final. Blast this infernal plague spot off the face of the earth! Perhaps even these biplanes may be units in that great fleet which may gather one day soon over the roaring furnaces and smoking chimneys of the great Westphalian death factory.

It is dark as we leave Brighton, for we have stopped there to dine, and as we start upon the twenty-five miles run which will bring us home we are warned that no lights of any kind are allowed along the front. This prohibition is in force in all the seaboard towns, and the object is supposed to be not only as a protection against possible Zeppelin raids, but as a means of preventing hostile submarines out at sea from taking their bearings. We crawl along a pitch-black front, with the shadowy form of other cars gliding past us. Every window is darkened. Who could believe that this is the Parade which only a year ago was the brightest and gayest promenade in England? It is good, for it brings the War home to the people, and as our folk have little imagination some tangible sign is needed. It impresses them more if it makes them uncomfortable, as the boys of old used to be whipped on the boundaries of the commons so that they would always carry them in their minds.

Once out of Brighton we switch on our lights, and are soon well upon our way. But light or dark, the War is always with us. As we pass the level crossing of the railway at Uckfield a policeman holds us up, vigorously swinging a lantern.

"Why didn't you pull up when the sentry challenged you just now?"

"We heard no sentry."

"You might have been shot. He challenged and got no answer."

We expressed our regrets, and the big man faded away into the darkness, still shaking his head and his lantern in mute reproach.

Our next episode was a more extraordinary one. Again we were aware of a form in the middle of the road, and of a waving of hands. We were also vaguely conscious of a second figure which formed a blur upon the footpath. This time it was a business-like corporal of Military Police who had stopped us.

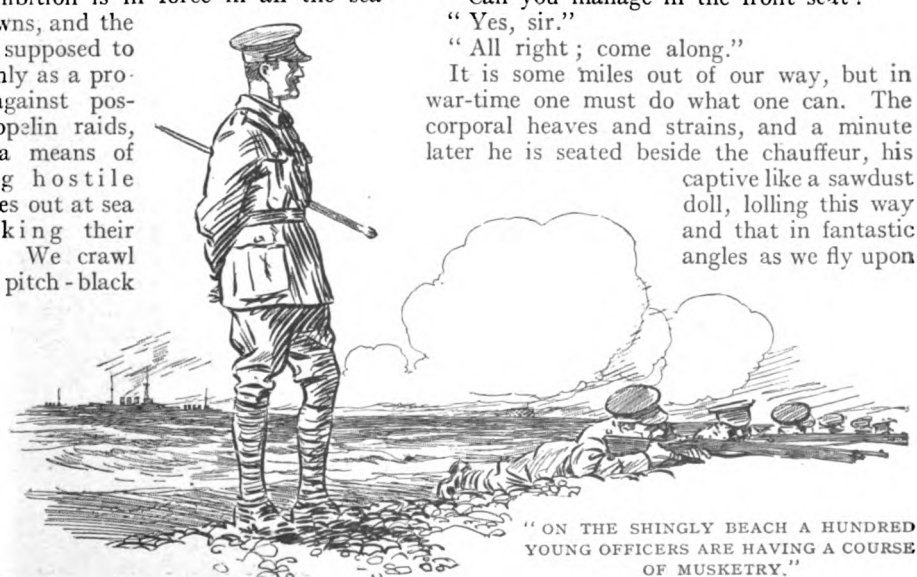
"I have a drunk prisoner here, sir, and I have to get him to Maresfield. Will you help me to do so?"

"Can you manage in the front seat?"

"Yes, sir."

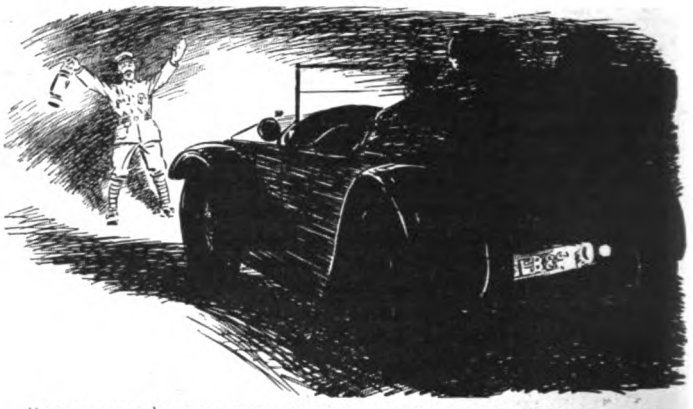
"All right; come along."

It is some miles out of our way, but in war-time one must do what one can. The corporal heaves and strains, and a minute later he is seated beside the chauffeur, his captive like a sawdust doll, lolling this way and that in fantastic angles as we fly upon



"ON THE SHINGLY BEACH A HUNDRED YOUNG OFFICERS ARE HAVING A COURSE OF MUSKETRY."

our way. The rush of night air seems to rouse the rascal, and we hear vague remonstrance, with frantic pawing of hands, but the corporal is skilled at the game, and holds him in some weird jujitsu grip. I tremble for my wife's ears, and for my motor's wind-screen, as the fellow becomes more lively. However, here we are at the entrance of an old English park, once the home of Shelley, the poet, and the car has pulled up at an outlying building converted into a guard-room. At a call a dozen men have appeared, and the corporal marches off with his prisoner. An instant later he is back.



"WHY DIDN'T YOU PULL UP WHEN THE SENTRY CHALLENGED YOU JUST NOW?"

"FOUR GREAT BIPLANES ARE SWINGING AND SWOOPING ABOVE."

"What are your charges, sir?" And then, sinking his voice and with the air of one who gives the straight tip, "Not out of my pocket, sir, but charged to the brigade."

Evidently he thinks that the chance of my life has come. The corporal clearly puts me down as a simpleton when I assure him that there is no money in the transaction. We turn the car, and speed on our way once more.

But even now our adventures of the night are not at an end. There is the glare of a great fire upon our right in the direction of Crowborough Camp. We are speculating as to its cause, when again we are held up by dark figures and dancing lanterns. An officer's patrol this time, wanting to know who we are, whence we come, and what we are doing. It seems that there has been an incendiary fire, that there is reason to put it down to spies, and that all motor-cars are under suspicion. Fortunately we are near home now, and our identity is easily proved. At eleven o'clock we reach our harbour once again.

But even now my war day is not ended. Our volunteers are holding a farmhouse with a line of sentries, and I have promised to try and break through. It is not too late, as they are on duty till midnight. There is just time to get a black cloak and rubber-soled shoes, and there follows an hour of the most interesting of games, skulking in the shadow of hedges, creeping down the darker side of walls, waiting breathlessly while the sentry's dark figure passes, and then hurrying swiftly on to make ground before he turns upon his beat. No need to recount the successive stages of my venture, save that last one which found me discovered and challenged when I was but a few yards from the very heart of the defences.

And so, long after midnight, to bed. The window of my bedroom is open, and as I take a last look out at the starry sky I hear far off the same dull throbbing roar with which the day began. It is the guns of Flanders, calling, calling, with their terrible voices, to me, to you, to all of us, to be up and ready for what the future may send.

The Love-r-ly Silver Cup.

By P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by Treyer Evans.

AS I walked to Geisenheimer's that night, I was feeling blue and restless, tired of New York, tired of dancing, tired of everything.

Broadway was full of people hurrying to the theatres. Cars rattled by. All the electric lights in the world were blazing down on the Great White Way. And it all seemed stale and dreary to me.

Geisenheimer's was full as usual. All the tables were occupied, and there were several couples already on the dancing-floor in the centre. The band was playing "Michigan."

> I want to go back, I want to go back
> To the place where I was born.
> Far away from harm
> With a milk-pail on my arm.

I suppose the fellow who wrote that would have called for the police if anyone had ever really tried to get him on to a farm, but he has certainly put something into the tune which makes you think he meant what he said. It's a home-sick tune, that.

I was just looking round for an empty table, when a man jumped up and came towards me, registering Joy as if I had been his long-lost sister.

He was from the country. I could see that. It was written all over him, from his face to his shoes.

He came up with his hand out, beaming.

"Why, Miss Roxborough!" he said.

"Why not?" I said.

"Don't you remember me?"

I didn't.

"My name is Ferris."

"It's a nice name, but it means nothing in my young life."

"I was introduced to you last time I came here. We danced together."

This seemed to bear the stamp of truth. If he was introduced to me, he probably danced with me. It's what I'm at Geisenheimer's for.

"When was it?"

"A year ago last April."

You can't beat these rural charmers. They think New York is folded up and put away in camphor when they leave, and only taken out again when they pay their next visit. The notion that anything could possibly have happened since he was last in our midst to blur the memory of that happy evening had not occurred to Mr. Ferris. I suppose he was so accustomed to dating things from "when I was in New York" that he thought everybody else must do the same.

"Why, of course I remember you," I said. "Algernon Clarence, isn't it?"

"Not Algernon Clarence. My name's Charlie."

"My mistake. And what's the great scheme, Mr. Ferris? Do you want to dance with me again?"

He did. So we started. Mine not to reason why, mine but to do or die, as the poem says. If an elephant had come into Geisenheimer's, and asked me to dance, I'd have had to do it. And I'm not saying that Mr. Ferris wasn't the next thing to it. He was one of those earnest, persevering dancers—the kind that have taken twelve correspondence lessons.

I guess I was about due that night to meet someone from the country. There still come days of spring when the country seems to get a strangle-hold on me and start in pulling. This particular day had been one of them. I got up in the morning and looked out of the window, and the breeze just wrapped me round and began whispering about pigs and chickens. And, when I went out on Fifth Avenue, there seemed to be flowers everywhere. I headed for the Park, and there was the grass all green, and the trees coming out, and a sort of something in the air. Why, if there hadn't have been a big policeman keeping an eye on me, I'd have flung myself down and bitten chunks out of the turf.

But somebody's always taking the joy out of life. I ought to have remembered that the most metropolitan thing in the metropolis is a rustic who's putting in a week there. We weren't thinking on the same plane, Charlie and I. The way I had been feeling all day, what I wanted to talk about was last season's crops. The subject he fancied was this season's chorus-girls. Our souls didn't touch by a mile and a half.

"This is the life," he said.

There's always a point when that sort of man says that.

"I suppose you come here a lot?" he said.

"Pretty often."

I didn't tell him that I came there every night, and that I came because I was paid for it. If you're a professional dancer at Geisenheimer's, you aren't supposed to advertise the fact. The management thinks that, if you do, it might send the public away thinking too hard, when they saw you win the Great Contest for the Love-r-ly Silver Cup which they offer later in the evening.

"HE WAS ONE OF THOSE EARNEST, PERSEVERING DANCERS—THE KIND THAT HAVE TAKEN TWELVE CORRESPONDENCE LESSONS."

That Love-r-ly Cup's a joke. I win it on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; and Mabel Francis wins it on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. It's all perfectly fair and square, of course. It's purely a matter of merit who wins the Love-r-ly Cup. Anybody could win it. Only, somehow, they don't. And the coincidence of the fact that Mabel and I always do has kind of got on the management's nerves, and they don't like us to tell people we're employed there. They prefer us to blush unseen.

"It's a great place," said Mr. Ferris, "and New York's a great place. I'd like to live in New York."

"The loss is ours. Why don't you?"

"Great city! But dad's dead now, and I've got the drug-store, you know."

He spoke as if I ought to remember reading about it in the papers.

"And I'm making good with it. What's more, I've got push and ideas. Say, I've got married since I saw you last."

"You have, have you?" I said. "Then what are you doing, may I ask, dancing on Broadway like a gay bachelor? I suppose you have left your wife at Hick's Corners singing 'Where is My Wandering Boy To-night?'"

"Not Hick's Corners. Ashley, Maine. That's where I live. My wife comes from Rodney. Pardon me; I'm afraid I stepped on your foot."

"My fault," I said. "I lost step. Well, I wonder you aren't ashamed even to think of your wife, when you've left her all alone out there, while you come whooping it up in New York. Haven't you got any conscience?"

"But I haven't left her. She's here."

"In New York?"

"In this restaurant. That's her up there."

I looked up at the balcony. There was a face hanging over the red-plush rail. It looked to me as if it had some hidden sorrow.

I'd noticed it before, when we were dancing, and I had wondered what the trouble was. Now I began to see.

" Why aren't you dancing with her and giving her a good time, then ? " I said.

" Oh, she's having a good time."

" She doesn't look it. She looks as if she would like to be down here, treading the measure."

" She doesn't dance much."

" Don't you have dances at Ashley ? "

" It's different at home. She dances well enough for Ashley, but—well, this sn't Ashley."

" I see. But you're not like that ? "

He gave a kind of smirk.

" Oh, I've been in New York before."

I could have bitten him, the sawn-off little ass ! He was ashamed to dance in public with his wife—didn't think her good enough for him. He had dumped her in a chair, given her a lemonade, and told her to be good, and then gone off to have a good time. They could have had me arrested for what I was thinking just then.

The band began to play something else.

" This is the life," said Mr. Ferris. " Let's do it again."

" Let somebody else do it," I said. " I'm tired. I'll introduce you to some friends of mine."

So I took him off, and switched him on to some girls I knew at one of the tables.

" Shake hands with my friend Mr. Ferris," I said. " He wants to show you the latest steps. He does most of them on your feet."

I could have betted on Charlie, the Debonair Pride of Ashley. Guess what he said ? He said, " This is the life."

And I left him and went up to the balcony.

She was leaning with her elbows on the red plush, looking down on the dancing-floor. They had just started another tune, and hubby was moving around with one of the girls I'd introduced him to. She didn't have to prove to me that she came from the country. I knew it. She was dressed in grey, with white muslin collar and cuffs, and her hair done simply. She had a black hat.

I kind of hovered for awhile. It isn't the best thing I do, but somehow I hesitated to charge in.

Then I braced up and made for the vacant chair.

" I'll sit here, if you don't mind," I said.

She turned in a startled way. I could see she was wondering who I was and what right I had there, but wasn't certain whether it might not be city etiquette for strangers to come and dump themselves down and start chatting.

" I've just been dancing with your husband," I said, to ease things along.

" I saw you."

And she fixed me with a pair of big brown eyes. I took one look at them, and then I had to tell myself that it might be pleasant and a relief to my feelings to take something solid and heavy and drop it over the rail on to hubby, but the management wouldn't like it. That was how I felt about him just then. The poor kid was doing everything with those eyes except cry. She looked like a dog that's been kicked.

She looked away, and fiddled with the string of the electric light. There was a hatpin lying on the table. She picked it up, and began to dig at the red plush.

" Oh, come on, sis," I said. " Tell me all about it."

" I don't know what you mean."

" You can't fool me. Tell me your troubles."

" I don't know you."

" You don't have to know a person to tell her your troubles. I sometimes tell mine to the cat that camps out on the wall opposite my room. What did you want to leave the country for, with the summer coming on ? "

She didn't answer, but I could see it coming, so I sat still, and waited. And, presently, she seemed to make up her mind that, even if it was no business of mine, it would be a relief to talk about it.

" We're on our honeymoon. Charlie wanted to come to New York. I didn't want to, but he was set on it. *He's* been here before."

" So he told me."

" He's wild about New York."

" But you're not ? "

" I hate it."

" Why ? "

She dug away at the red plush with the hatpin, picking out little bits and dropping them over the edge. I could see she was bracing herself to tell me the whole trouble. There's a time comes, when things aren't going right and you've had all you can stand, when you have got to tell somebody about it, no matter who it is.

" I hate New York," she said, getting it out at last with a rush. " I'm scared of it. It—it isn't fair Charlie bringing me here. I didn't want to come. I knew what would happen. I felt it all along."

"What do you think will happen, then?"

She must have picked at least an inch of the red plush before she answered. It's lucky Jimmy, the balcony waiter, didn't see her, it would have broken his heart; he's as proud of that red plush as if he had paid for it himself.

"When I first went to live at Rodney," she said, "two years ago—we moved there from Illinois—there was a man there named Tyson, Jack Tyson. He lived all alone, and didn't seem to want to know anyone. I couldn't understand it till somebody told me all about him. I can understand it now. Jack Tyson married a Rodney girl, and they came to New York for their honeymoon, just like us. And, when they got there, I guess she got comparing him with the fellows she saw, and comparing the city with Rodney, and when she got home she just couldn't settle down."

"Well?"

"After they had been back in Rodney for a little while, she ran away. Back to the city, I guess."

"I suppose he got a divorce?"

"No, he didn't. He still thinks she may come back to him."

"He still thinks she will come back?" I said. "After she has been away two years?"

"Yes. He keeps her things just the same as she left them when she went away—everything just the same."

"But isn't he angry with her for what she did? If I was a man and a girl treated me that way, I'd be apt to murder her if she tried to show up again."

"He wouldn't. Nor would I if—if anything like that happened to me. I'd wait and wait, and go on hoping all the time. And I'd go down to the station to meet the train every afternoon, just like Jack Tyson."

Something splashed on the tablecloth. It made me jump.

"For goodness' sake!" I said. "What's your trouble? Brace up. I know it's a sad story, but it's not your funeral."

"It is. It is. The same thing's going to happen to me."

"'I'LL SIT HERE, IF YOU DON'T MIND,' I SAID."

"Take a hold on yourself. Don't cry like that."

"I can't help it. Oh, I knew it would happen. It's happening right now. Look—look at him."

I glanced over the rail, and I saw what she meant. There was her Charlie dancing about all over the floor as if he had just discovered that he hadn't lived till then. I saw him say something to the girl he was dancing with. I wasn't near enough to hear it, but I bet it was 'This is the life!'"

If I had been his wife, in the same position as this kid, I guess I'd have felt as bad as she did; for, if ever a man exhibited all the symptoms of incurable New-Yorkitis, it was this Charlie Ferris.

"I'm not like these New York girls," she choked. "I can't be smart. I don't want to be. I just want to live at home and be happy. I knew it would happen if we came to the city. He doesn't think me good enough for him. He looks down on me."

"Pull yourself together."

"And I do love him so."

Goodness knows what I should have said, if I could have thought of anything to say. But just then the music stopped, and somebody on the floor below began to speak.

"Ladeez 'n gem'men," he said, "there will now take place our great Num-bah contest. This gen-u-ine sporting contest——"

It was Izzy Baermann making his nightly speech, introducing the Love-r-ly Cup, and it meant that, for me, duty called. From where I sat I could see Izzy looking about the room, and I knew he was looking for me. It's the management's nightmare that one of these evenings Mabel or I won't show up and somebody else will get away with the Love-r-ly Cup.

"Sorry I've got to go," I said. "I have to be in this."

And then, suddenly, I had the great idea. It came to me like a flash. I looked at her, crying there, and I looked over the rail at Charlie, the Boy Wonder, and I knew that this was where I got a strangle-hold on my place in the Hall of Fame, along with the great thinkers of the age.

"Come on," I said. "Come along. Stop crying, and powder your nose, and get a move on. You're going to dance this."

"But Charlie doesn't want to dance with me."

"It may have escaped your notice," I said, "but your Charlie is not the only man in New York, or even in this restaurant. I'm going to dance with Charlie myself, and I'll introduce you to someone who can go through the movements. Listen."

"The lady of each couple"—this was Izzy, getting it off his diaphragm—"will receive a ticket containing a num-bah. The dance will then proceed, and the num-bahs will be eliminated one by one, those called out by the judge kindly returning to their seats as their num-bah is called. The num-bah finally remaining is the winning num-bah. The contest is a genuine sporting contest, decided purely by the skill of the holders of the various num-bahs." Izzy stopped blushing at the age of one. "Will ladies now kindly step forward and receive their num-bahs? The winner—the holder of the num-bah left on the floor when the other num-bahs have been eliminated" (I could see Izzy getting more and more uneasy, wondering where on earth I'd got to)—"will receive this Love-r-ly Silver Cup, presented by the management. Ladies will now kindly step forward and receive their num-bahs."

I turned to Mrs. Charlie.

"There," I said; "don't you want to win a love-r-ly silver cup?"

"But I couldn't."

"You never know your luck."

"But it isn't luck. Didn't you hear him say? It's a contest decided purely by skill."

"Well, try your skill, then." I felt as if I could have shaken her. "For goodness' sake," I said, "show a little grit! Aren't you going to stir a finger to keep your Charlie? Suppose you win, think what it will mean. He will look up to you for the rest of your life. When he starts talking about New York, all you will have to say is, 'New York? Ah, yes; that was the town I won that love-r-ly silver cup in, was it not?' And he'll drop as if you had hit him behind the ear with a sandbag. Pull yourself together, and try."

I saw those brown eyes of hers flash, and she said, "I'll try."

"Good for you," I said. "Now you get those tears dried, and fix yourself up, and I'll go down and get the tickets."

Izzy was mighty relieved when I bore down on him.

"Gee!" he said; "I thought you had run away, or was sick, or something. Here's your ticket."

"I want two, Izzy. One's for a friend of mine. And, say, Izzy, I'd take it as a personal favour if you would let her stop on the floor as one of the last two couples. There's a reason. She's a kid from the country, and she wants to make a hit."

"Sure, that'll be all right. Here are the tickets. Yours is thirty-six, hers is ten." He lowered his voice. "Don't go mixing them."

I went back to the balcony. On the way I got hold of Charlie.

"We're dancing this together," I said.

He grinned all across his face.

I found Mrs. Charlie looking as if she had never shed a tear in her life. She certainly had pluck, that kid.

"Come on," I said. "Stick to your ticket like wax, and watch your step."

I guess you've seen these sporting contests at Geisenheimer's. Or, if you haven't seen them at Geisenheimer's, you've seen them somewhere else. They're all the same.

When we began, the floor was crowded so that there was hardly elbow-room. Don't tell me there aren't any optimists nowadays. Everyone was looking as if they were wondering whether to have the love-r-ly silver cup in the sitting-room or the bedroom. You never saw such a hopeful gang in your life.

Presently Izzy gave tongue. The management expects him to be humorous on these occasions, so he did his best.

"Num-bahs seven, eleven, and twenty-one will kindly rejoin their sorrowing friends."

This gave us a little more elbow-room, and the band started again. A few minutes later, Izzy once more :—

"Num-bahs thirteen, sixteen, and seventeen—good-bye!"

Off we went again.

"Num-bah twelve, we hate to part with you, but—back to your table!"

A plump girl in a red hat, who had been dancing with a kind smile, as if she were doing it to amuse the children, left the floor.

"Num-bahs six, fifteen, and twenty, thumbs down!"

And pretty soon the only couples left were Charlie and me, Mrs. Charlie and the fellow I'd introduced her to, and a bald-headed man and a girl in a white hat. He was one of your stick-at-it performers. He had been dancing all the evening. I had noticed him from the balcony. He looked like a hard-boiled egg from up there.

He was a trier all right, that fellow; and, had things been otherwise, so to speak, I'd have been glad to see him win. But it was not to be. Ah, no!

"Num-bah nineteen, you're getting all flushed. Take a rest."

So there it was, a straight contest between me and Charlie and Mrs. Charlie and her man. Every nerve in my system was tingling with suspense and excitement, was it not? It was not.

Charlie, as I've already hinted, was not a dancer who took much of his attention off his feet while in action. He was there to do his durnedest, not to inspect objects of interest by the wayside. The correspondence college he'd attended doesn't guarantee to teach you to do two things at once. It won't bind itself to teach you to look round the room while you're dancing. So Charlie hadn't the least suspicion of the state of the drama. He was breathing heavily down my neck in a determined sort of way, with his eyes glued to the floor. All he knew was that the competition had thinned out a bit and the honour of Ashley, Maine, was in his hands.

You know how the public begins to sit up and take notice when these dance-contests have been narrowed down to two couples. There are evenings when I quite forget myself, when I'm one of the last two left in, and get all excited. There's a sort of hum in the air, and, as you go round the room, people at the tables start applauding. Why, if you didn't know about the inner workings of the thing, you'd be all of a twitter.

It didn't take my practised ear long to discover that it wasn't me and Charlie that the great public was cheering for. We would go round the floor without getting a hand, and every time Mrs. Charlie and her guy got to a corner there was a noise like Election Night. She had made a hit.

I took a look at her across the floor, and I didn't wonder. She was a different kid from what she'd been upstairs. I never saw anybody look so happy and pleased with herself. Her eyes were like lamps, and her cheeks all pink, and she was going at it like a champion. I knew what had made a hit with the people. It was the look of her. She made you think of fresh milk and new-laid eggs and birds singing. To see her was like getting away to the country in August. It's funny about people who live in the city. They chuck out their chests, and talk about little old New York being good enough for them, and there's a street in heaven they call Broadway, and all the rest of it; but it seems to me that what they really live for is that three weeks in the summer when they get away into the country. I knew exactly why they were cheering so hard for Mrs. Charlie. She made them think of their holidays which were coming along, when they would go and board at the farm and drink out of the oaken bucket, and call the cows by their first names.

Gee, I felt just like that myself. All day the country had been tugging at me, and now it tugged worse than ever.

I could have smelt the new-mown hay if it wasn't that, when you're in Geisenheimer's, you have to smell Geisenheimer's because it leaves no chance for competition.

"Keep working," I said to Charlie. "It looks to me as if we were going back in the betting."

that prevented his job being perfect. Mabel Francis told me that one night when Izzy declared her the winner of the great sporting contest it was such raw work that she thought there'd have been a riot. It looked pretty much as if he was afraid the same thing was going to happen now. There wasn't a doubt which of us two couples was the one that the customers wanted to see win that love-r-ly silver cup. was a walk-over for Mrs.

"IT WAS A REGULAR TRIUMPHAL PROGRESS FOR THE KID. SHE AND HER PARTNER WERE DOING ONE OR TWO ROUNDS FOR EXHIBITION PURPOSES."

"Uh-huh," he says, too busy to blink.

"Do some of those fancy steps of yours. We need them in our business."

And the way that boy worked—it was astonishing!

Out of the corner of my eye I could see Izzy Baermann, and he wasn't looking happy. He was nerving himself for one of those quick referee's decisions—the sort you make and then duck under the ropes and run five miles to avoid the incensed populace. It was this kind of thing happening every now and then

Charlie, and Charlie and I were simply among those present.

But Izzy had his duty to do, and drew a salary for doing it, so he moistened his lips, and looked round to see that his strategic railways weren't blocked, swallowed twice, and said, in a husky voice:—

"Num-bah ten, please re-tiah!"

I stopped at once.

"Come along," said I to Charlie. "That's our exit cue." And we walked off the floor amidst applause.

"Well," says Charlie, taking out his handkerchief and attending to his brow, which was like the village blacksmith's. "We didn't do so bad, did we? I guess we didn't do so bad."

And he looks up at the balcony, expecting to see the dear little wife draped over the rail, worshipping him, when, just as his eye is moving up, it gets caught by the sight of her a whole heap lower down than he had expected—on the floor, in fact.

She wasn't doing much in the worshipping line just at the moment. She was too busy.

It was a regular triumphal progress for the kid. She and her partner were doing one or two rounds now for exhibition purposes, as the winning couple always do at Geisenheimer's, and the room was fairly rising at them. You'd have thought from the way they were clapping that they had been betting all their spare cash on her.

Charlie gets her well focused, then he lets his jaw drop till he pretty near bumps it against the floor.

"But—but—but——" he begins.

"I know," I said. "It begins to look as if she could dance well enough for the city, after all. It begins to look as if she had sort of played a trick on somebody, doesn't it? It begins to look as if it were a pity you didn't think of dancing with her yourself."

"I—I—I——"

"You come along and have a nice cold drink," I said, "and you'll soon pick up."

He tottered after me to a table, looking as if he had been hit by a street-car.

I was so busy looking after Charlie, flapping the towel and working on him with the oxygen, that, if you'll believe me, it wasn't for quite a time that I thought of glancing round to see how the thing had struck Izzy Baermann.

If you can imagine a fond father whose only son has hit him with a brick, jumped on his stomach, and then gone off with all his money, you have a pretty good notion of how poor Izzy looked.

He was staring at me across the room and talking to himself and jerking his hands about. Whether he thought he was talking to himself, or whether he was rehearsing the scene where he broke it to the boss that a mere stranger had got away with his love-r-ly silver cup, I don't know. Which ever it was, he was being mighty eloquent.

I gave him a nod, as much as to say that it would all come right in the future, and then

"MRS. CHARLIE, CARRYING THE

I turned to Charlie again. He was beginning to pick up.

"She won the cup!" he said, in a dazed voice, looking at me as if I could do something about it.

"You bet she did!"

"But—well, what do you know about that?"

I saw that the moment had come to put it straight to him.

"I'll tell you what I know about it," I said. "If you take my advice, you'll hustle that kid straight back to Ashley, or wherever it is where you poison the natives by making up the wrong prescriptions, before she gets New York into her system. When I was talking to her upstairs, she was telling me about a fellow in her village who got it in the neck just the same as you're apt to do."

He started.

"She was telling you about Jack Tyson?"

"That was his name—Jack Tyson. He lost his wife through letting her have too much New York. Don't you think it's funny she should have mentioned him, if she hadn't had some idea that she might act just the same as his wife did?"

He turned quite green.

"You don't think she would do that?"

"Well, if you'd heard her! She couldn't talk of anything except this Tyson and what his wife did to him. She talked of it sort of sad kind of regretful, as if she was sorry, but felt that it had to be. I could see she had been thinking about it a whole lot."

Charlie stiffened in his seat, and then began to melt with pure fright. He took up his empty glass with a shaking hand, and drank a long drink out of it. It didn't take much observation to see that he had had the jolt he wanted, and was going to be a whole heap less jaunty and metropolitan from now on. In fact, the way he looked, I should say he had finished with metropolitan jauntiness for the rest of his life.

"I'll take her home to-morrow," he said. "But—will she come?"

"That's up to you. If you can persuade her—— Here she is now. I should start at once."

Mrs. Charlie, carrying the cup, came to the table. I was wondering what would be the first thing she would say. If it had been Charlie, of course he'd have said, 'This is the life!' But I looked for something snappier from her. If I had been in her place, there were at least ten things I could have thought to say, each nastier than the other.

She sat down, and put the cup on the table.

CUP, CAME TO THE TABLE."

Then she gave the cup a long look. Then she drew a deep breath. Then she looked at Charlie.

"Oh, Charlie, dear," she said, "I do wish I'd been dancing with you."

Well, I'm not sure that that wasn't just as good as anything I would have said.

Charlie got right off the mark. After what I had told him, he wasn't wasting any time.

"Darling," he said, humbly, "you're a wonder. What will they say about this at home?" He did pause here for a moment, for it took nerve to say it; but then he went right on. "Mary, how would it be if we went home right away—first train to-morrow, and showed it to them?"

"Oh, Charlie!" she said.

His face lit up as if somebody had pulled a switch.

"You will! You don't want to stop on? You aren't wild about New York?"

"If there was a train," she said, "I'd start to-night. But I thought you loved the city so, Charlie?"

He gave a kind of shiver. "I never want to see it again in my life!" he said.

"You'll excuse me," I said, getting up. "I think there's a friend of mine wants to speak to me."

And I crossed over to where Izzy had been standing for the last five minutes, making signals to me with his eyebrows.

You couldn't have called Izzy coherent at first. He certainly had trouble with his vocal cords, poor fellow. There was one of those African explorer men used to come to Geisenheimer's a lot when he was home from roaming the trackless desert, and he used to tell me about tribes he had met who didn't use real words at all, but talked to one another in clicks and gurgles. He imitated some of their chatter one night, to amuse me, and, believe me, Izzy Baermann started talking the same language now. Only he didn't do it to amuse me.

He was like one of those gramophone records when it's getting into its stride.

"Be calm, Isadore," I said. "Something is troubling you. Tell me all about it."

He clicked some more, and then he got it out.

"Say, are you crazy? What did you do it for? Didn't I tell you as plain as I could—didn't I say it twenty times, when you came for the tickets, that yours was thirty-six?"

"Didn't you say my friend's was thirty-six?"

"Are you deaf? I said hers was ten!"

"Then," I said, handsomely, "say no more. The mistake was mine. It begins to look as if I must have got them mixed."

He did a few Swedish exercises.

"Say no more? That's good! That's great! You've got nerve. I'll say that."

"It was a lucky mistake, Izzy. It saved your life. The people would have lynched you if you had given me the cup. They were solid for her."

"What's the boss going to say when I tell him?"

"Never mind what the boss will say. Haven't you any romance in your system, Izzy? Look at those two, sitting there with their heads together. Isn't it worth a silver cup to have made them happy for life? They are on their honeymoon, Isadore. Tell the boss exactly how it happened, and say that I thought it was up to Geisenheimer's to give them a wedding-present."

He clicked for a spell.

"Ah!" he said. "Ah! Now you've done it! Now you've given yourself away! You did it on purpose. You mixed those tickets on purpose. I thought as much. Say, who do you think you are, doing this sort of thing? Don't you know that professional dancers are three for ten cents? I could go out right now and whistle and get a dozen girls for your job. The boss'll sack you just one minute after I tell him."

"No, he won't, Izzy, because I'm going to resign."

"You'd better!"

"That's what I think. I'm sick of this place, Izzy. I'm sick of dancing. I'm sick of New York. I'm sick of everything. I'm going back to the country. I thought I had got the pigs and chickens clear out of my system, but I hadn't. I've suspected it for a long, long time, and to-night I know it. Tell the boss, with my love, that I'm sorry, but it had to be done. And if he wants to talk back, he must do it by letter. Mrs. John Tyson, Rodney, Maine, is the address."

German Caricatures of "Kultur."

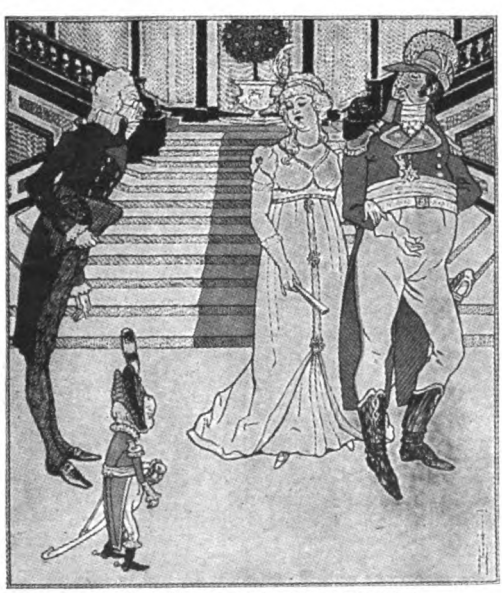
By WALTER EMANUEL.

I HAVE in my possession two volumes of Germany's leading satirical journal, *Simplicissimus*, dated fifteen years ago. A perusal of their pages, by the light of the present terrible war, is both interesting and instructive.

No more biting cartoons have appeared in any German paper during the war than those in *Simplicissimus*—and that is saying a good deal. Often lying and unjust, and not less often indecent as these are, I cannot honestly deny them occasional wit, and frequent fine draughtsmanship. A witty German, it is true, is as rare as a hippopotamus that dances with real grace, but he does occur now and then. Accidents will happen in the best-regulated nations.

What interested me in looking through these volumes was to be reminded that *Simplicissimus* was not always so fond of the Kaiser as it is now, nor so enamoured of German "Kultur." *Simplicissimus* used to be a rebel, and, at one time, fought for many of the ideals of the Allies. Indeed, the artist-editor, T. T. Heine, has spent six months in prison for *lèse-majesté*.

And I am not surprised. Again and again he attacks, more or less openly, the All-Highest. One of the Kaiser's supernatural qualities is his ability to do everything; and in a cartoon entitled "The Cares of Government" one sees an Emperor (the costume is not of to-day, but the allusion is perfectly plain) seated in his throne-room with his hand to his brow, deep in thought. By his side stand two Ministers. It is the beginning of the day. "Ah, the rabble!" murmurs the Emperor. "What know they of the cares of governing? Each morning to have to decide which I shall do: call into being a picture, compose a poem, create a piece of music, or solve the social question!"



THE DUMB CROWN PRINCE.

"Your Royal Highness, to my deep regret I must inform you that the son of the All-Highest, the Crown Prince, is dumb, and will never have the gift of speech."

"Is that so? Well, my dear doctor, perhaps it is all for the best."

His fondness for acting the orator on every possible occasion, often to the confusion of Ministers, is also hit at in "The Dumb Crown Prince." The Court Physician says, "Your Royal Highness, to my deep regret I must inform you that the son of the All-Highest, the Crown Prince, is dumb, and will never have the gift of speech." "Is that so? Well, my dear doctor," says the mythical monarch, "perhaps it is all for the best."

More daring still is the drawing called "Frederick the Little," for this is actually a counterfeit presentment of

GIFTS OF "KULTUR."

"Soldiers of Germany, here are your most holy possessions back again."

William II. The scene is a masked ball, and the Emperor is dressed in the costume of Frederick the Great. The hat comes over his eyes, and the jacket hangs over his hands and touches the ground. "Why,"

CHILDREN OF "KULTUR."

"The children of the Herr Major on their holidays play at 'Chinese War' and spread Prussian 'Kultur.'"

says a friend, "the costume is too big for you, little man."

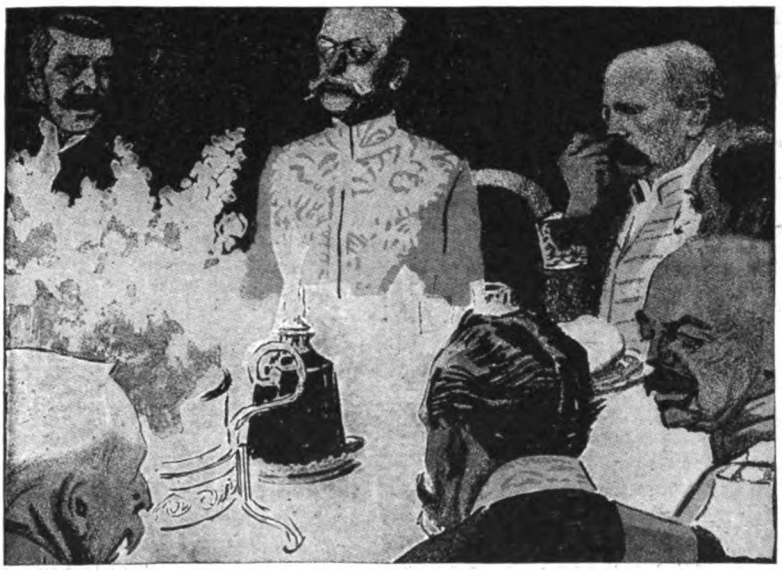
My volumes cover the period of the International Expedition to China under the command of Count Waldersee. One of the Kaiser's most famous productions had been a cartoon which he produced some little time before the trouble in the East, in collaboration with a tame Professor of Art, drawing attention to "The Yellow Peril." "Nations of Europe," cried a stout female representing that continent, "protect your most holy possessions!" Heine draws two Chinese soldiers firing at the international army. The gun is a Krupp gun, and the ammunition is Krupp ammunition. "Soldiers of Germany," they say, "here are your most holy possessions back again."

AT THE GATE OF HEAVEN.

ST. PETER: "I must ask you, please, to leave those heads in the cloak-room!"

The fighting in China—or military parade perhaps one ought to call it—serves the purpose of some nasty remarks on the culture of the Huns. For example, our friend depicts a number of children in a meadow cutting the heads off fowls and impaling them on sticks, hanging a dog, seizing a little girl by the hair and threatening her with a sword, and spearing a baby with a flagstaff to which are attached the national colours. The title of this pretty scene is: "The children of the Herr Major on their holidays play at 'Chinese War' and spread Prussian 'Kultur.'"

Again, a German warrior, in expeditionary



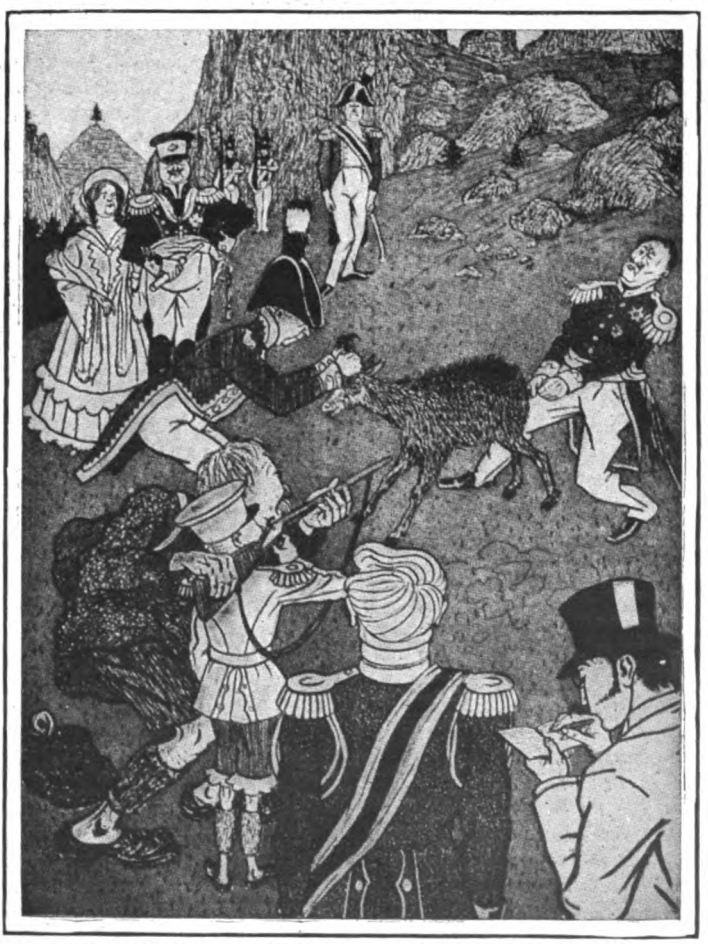
AT A DIPLOMATIC DINNER IN PEKING.

"Gentlemen, our good host has prepared yet another little entertainment for us. When the table is cleared he is going to have a couple of mandarins executed."

uniform, arrives at the Gate of Heaven. In each hand he holds a Chinaman's head, while a similar souvenir is suspended by the pigtail from his belt. "I must ask you, please," says St. Peter, "to leave those heads in the cloak-room."

A further drawing shows us a diplomatic dinner in Peking. "Gentlemen," announces one of the distinguished guests of the great German personage, "our good host has prepared yet another little entertainment for us. When the table is cleared he is going to have a couple of mandarins executed."

Very clever, too, is our last illustration, showing "The Crown Prince's First Chamois Hunt." Nothing much, it will be seen, was left to chance, nor did the skill of the young sportsman lack an appreciative audience.



THE CROWN PRINCE'S FIRST CHAMOIS HUNT.

The Other Woman

by

WILLIAM T. NICHOLS

Illustrated by
W. S. BAGDATOPULOS

THE horses scrambled up the final pitch of the long ascent and halted, with quivering flanks and heaving nostrils. They were mountain horses, as quick as cats and as lean and hard as nails, but the climb had winded them, and though the riders shivered in the November breeze that swept the summit of the ridge, they gave their mounts a well-won, if brief, breathing-spell. The guide, a stocky fellow, with a led horse at his left, pointed to the valley before them.

"There's the nest," said he. "Devil's Pocket, they call it. Good name, ain't it, Mr. Holcomb?"

"Good as the place, no doubt." Holcomb spoke crisply, his steady gaze on the valley. His strong face wore a look of determination, which had in it a touch of grimness.

The man riding at Holcomb's elbow leaned forward in his saddle. His glance ranged the steep slopes, the dull green of the scrub-pines, the outcropping rocks, the dismal pond at the bottom of the basin, and the fringe of cleared land beside it.

"Lord! but what a gash in the earth!" he said. "Surely, Holcomb, you don't expect to find Elston here? The petted darling of academic groves, assistant professor at twenty-three—such a man in such a hole! They don't comport, the place and the man."

"The Elston that was, you mean. We're to deal with the Elston that is."

"Missing for fifteen years?"

"It's seventeen since the doctors sent him into the woods. He's virtually been missing since the first six months."

"Then there's chance for change."

"Much chance. You're here, Mason, to judge how far the change has gone."

The other nodded.

"Ought to be an interesting case. But let's at it. I'm freezing here."

A word to the guide, and the party was again in motion, descending a trail that was sometimes path and sometimes ledge and sometimes the bed of a stream. It wound past boulders, dodged fallen trees, and finally, with a sweep about the shoulder of a hill, reached level ground within a stone's throw of a cluster of hovels. They were miserable cabins, rough, unpainted, crowded together. Where a shed had been needed boards had been laid upon a pole; when need of the shed had passed, no effort had been made to repair damages if pole broke or board fell. Here and there bare patches of ground told of half-hearted cultivation; but the whole air of the hamlet was that of the poverty that finds in idleness the highest good.

Three or four lank curs caught sight of the intruders and began to yelp; a gaunt, yellow mongrel hound bayed deeply, and faces appeared at doors and windows. A man emerged from one of the houses and stood watching the new-comers.

Mason, from his post in the rear, watched the scene critically. He saw Holcomb dismount and approach the uncouth figure, and experienced a sudden sense of unreasoning disapproval. The difference between the two was too marked: Holcomb, clean shaven, well-groomed, tall, broad-shouldered, erect, with the vigour of the athlete who from choice keeps himself in training long after the days of contests are over; the stranger, with tangled hair streaming from under a shapeless hat, and face half-hidden by a straggling, unkempt beard, slouching in garments so ragged and patched and dirt-stained as to give little hint of their

original foundation. No, the contrast was too violent. One stood for efficiency, the other for sloth and weakness. It was the machine gun against the matchlock—nay, against bow and arrow. It was like a war of civilization against the lost tribes, with the result foredetermined with precision.

Holcomb was close to the man before he spoke. Then it was a single word, curt and imperative :—

"Elston!"

The man pushed the hair from before his eyes and stared at Holcomb.

"Elston?" he said, doubtfully. "Elston? Why, yes—yes, I'm Elston."

"I want you."

"Why?"

"A man can't escape his fate. Your fate was to be born who you were and what you were. You were held to your lot in life by certain bonds. They've been rather slack, maybe; they're tightening now."

The eyes under the tangle of hair grew troubled.

"The bonds are tightening?" the man repeated, and it was like a child striving to master the meaning of a difficult phrase. "I—I think I know what you mean. But why should they tighten—now?"

"That's fate."

"I—I used to think it would have—to be—some time," Elston said, hesitatingly. "But that—that was long ago. Lately I must—yes, I must have forgotten the—the bonds."

"But now you recall them well enough?"

"Yes."

"Then you know why I want you to come with me."

The man cast swift glances right and left. "But—but if I won't go?" he asked. Holcomb laid a heavy hand upon his shoulder.

"Elston, yonder is a deputy sheriff with a warrant for your arrest; but he will not serve it unless you force him to do so. Your only choice is to come as free man or prisoner."

The shaggy creature tried to shrink back, but Holcomb held him fast.

"It's no use, Elston," he said, not unkindly. "Better come peaceably. I ought to tell you: everything may be as it was—everything, mind you."

Elston no longer struggled. Under the coating of tan a faint colour was stealing into his face.

"I understand," he said, slowly. "And I remember you—you're a lawyer. Yes, I understand."

"And you'll come—at least to Pentonville? We'll talk things over there."

"I won't—resist." There was a pause before the last word, as if the man were searching the recesses of his brain for something exactly to express his meaning.

"Good enough. I suggest that the sooner we start the better."

"Yes," Elston said. With sudden decision he walked to the horse held by the deputy, and climbed into the saddle. Even Holcomb was surprised by the abruptness of the movement.

"If you've any word, any message to leave——" he began, almost apologetically; but Elston shook his head.

"No; there is nothing to say."

A man or two had appeared, and three or four slatternly women, cowering in a miserable group, set up a shrill lamentation; but there was no sign of resistance. Indeed, there was a hopelessness in the wail that made Mason swear under his breath. It was like the bleating of terrified sheep beholding one of their number seized upon and carried off before their eyes, with no thought of rescue and with none of the despairing courage that should spring from what might be a common danger.

"Well, I know now what ululation means," he told himself. "It's a better word than ever I thought it. It gets the——"

There Mason checked himself. A woman as ragged as the others, yet who could not be called a slattern, had darted from a door and run up to Elston. Mason gritted his teeth. This was the sort of thing he had been dreading, and it caught hold upon him. The woman was young, and unbowed by toil or privation; she moved with a swiftness and a grace that was almost feline. She threw herself upon Elston, crying out piteously, clinging to his knee, fawning upon him. The great yellow hound bounded beside her, baying in deep-throated excitement. The deputy, with a glance at the dog, tightened his grasp on the stout club he carried, and rode nearer; but Elston bent down and spoke a word in the woman's ear. None of the others heard the word, but its effect was amazing. The woman's hands dropped, and she fell back a pace, swiftly submissive, and looking up at Elston from great dark eyes in which the tears were welling. The dog, turning from his master, sprang upon her, resting his forepaws on her body, every inch of his ugly length tense with sympathy. Holcomb caught the bridle of Elston's horse.

"SHE THREW HERSELF UPON ELSTON, CRYING OUT PITEOUSLY, CLINGING TO HIS KNEE, FAWNING UPON HIM."

"Come!" he said, sharply. "The quicker we get away the better for all concerned."

The horses trotted briskly across the level stretch, but when the party reached the trail and fell into single file, Mason, the last in the line, looked back. The woman had fallen in a heap on the ground and lay motionless, the hound licking her face.

Up the trail and over the divide Elston rode like a man in a dream, his head bowed on his breast. Half an hour from the valley the cavalcade reached a farm-house; and here Mason was moved to note the completeness of the arrangements. A big touring-car was awaiting the party, and one of the deputy's helpers came forward to take charge of the horses.

Elston stepped into the tonneau without protest or comment, though it might well have been the first automobile upon which he had ever rested his eyes. The officer sat at his right and Holcomb at his left, no chance given, Mason observed, for a leap for liberty.

The car felt its way along the rough road from the farm-house, and turned at last into the highway which led to Pentonville. Then there was swifter motion, but Elston displayed no curiosity. He held his silence while the miles fell away behind them, and it was not until the town was in sight and the car swerved into the drive leading to a big white hotel that he opened his lips.

"Not there," he said to Holcomb. "I'm not fit."

The big man spoke reassuringly:—

"This is a summer house which has opened a wing for us by special arrangement. There'll be nobody about."

They went in by a side door, which swung as by invisible hands at their approach. Holcomb glanced at his watch.

"We'll dine at seven, Mason," he said. "That will give us two hours."

An hour would have been liberal allowance for the little Mason had to do, and he was the first to enter the private dining-room. Its appearance interested him. Logs blazed cheerfully in the big fireplace, a piano stood in a corner; in the centre was a table set for

three, and elaborately set; half-a-dozen electric lamps flooded the room with light. Mason smiled a bit quizzically when he observed the circumstance. There were to be no friendly shadows to hide the face of the guest of the evening.

A clock on the mantel struck the hour, and a door opened. Holcomb entered, his arm through that of a man who bore small resemblance to the tattered figure from the valley. The tangled mass of hair had fallen before a barber's shears; the beard was close-cropped and pointed. The dinner-coat, though not of recent cut, was freshly pressed. The black bow above the expanse of shirt-front was very small. It was one of the three things to which Mason gave special heed. In the old days Elston had had rather a fad for tiny bows. The second of the things was the man's shoes. Holcomb, the thorough, had argued that the foot which was often unshod would increase in dimensions, and the shoes he had provided were two sizes larger than those Elston wore in his period of civilization. And the shoes fitted! So much could not be said for the coat; and this was the third of Mason's mental notes. The new Elston was thicker in the shoulder and thinner about the waist and hips than the Elston of old. He carried himself less erectly, and his walk had the spring that turf gives and smooth pavement takes away.

Holcomb chose to present the others as if they were meeting for the first time that day.

"Elston, this is Dr. Mason," he said. "You probably remember him as 'Tolly' Mason, of the class after yours."

"I think—I think I know him," Elston said, slowly.

He diffidently extended a hand. Mason, gripping it hard, found it lying limp in his grasp.

"I recall you perfectly, Elston," he said, heartily. To himself he was adding that there was more change in the face than was to be accounted for by the mere passage of the years. It seemed broader; the cheek-bones were higher. The eyes shifted, not with fear, but with uncertainty. "You've dropped the glasses, though, I see," he added, aloud. "I congratulate you."

Elston glanced at Holcomb.

"I—I lost them years ago. I haven't needed them."

Holcomb nodded carelessly.

"Mason's right: it's a lucky man who finds his sight improved. And now let's to dinner. I'm hungry as a wolf. If you'll take that chair, Elston——"

The door opened again, and a silent-footed waiter entered. Elston obediently seated himself. To Mason's notion he studied the array of forks and spoons before him half-curiously, half-apprehensively, and furtively glanced at his companions. Well, a man seventeen years in the wilds might grow rusty on the order of precedence of table silver. The doctor decided to give a friendly cue.

"I'm as hungry as a whole pack of wolves," he said, picking up a spoon as the waiter placed his soup before him. "This mountain air is the best appetizer in the world."

"But you won't miss it, Elston," Holcomb said, sharply. "There are other airs as invigorating, other skies as clear."

Elston started. He dropped his eyes in embarrassment, and seemed for the first time to be aware of the food before him. And then, of a sudden stirred by the pangs of hunger, he caught up the plate in both hands, and drained it as one might drink from a cup. Holcomb turned to Mason.

"Ought to be great fishing hereabouts," he said. "Some day we must get Elston to tell us all about it."

"Fine!" cried the doctor, enthusiastically. "Everybody'll be delighted to hear his stories."

Elston set down his plate.

"Holcomb, you see," he said, "I—I forgot."

"What you'll pick up in an hour. The tricks of the trade come back soon enough."

"The tricks of the trade!" Elston spoke with a bitterness which lacked little of being despair.

"Exactly. These things are mere matters of habit. They're like small talk; they're part of the lubrication of the machinery of civilization."

"Lubrication—machinery of civilization—small talk?" Elston repeated, as a boy might repeat a lesson.

"Why, yes—oil for the machine, you know."

"I—I understand," Elston said, hesitatingly; "but I have to—to——"

"Grope?" Mason suggested.

"Yes, grope—that is the word I wanted."

"But when you grope, you find," Holcomb pointed out.

"It may be so," Elston said, with dreary acquiescence. "But you spoke of small talk. Small talk? You tell me it is seventeen years since I—I dropped out. Those years I've been with people who use—how many words do you suppose? Not more than three hundred."

"You mean they have a vocabulary of three hundred words?" Mason asked.

Elston turned to him gratefully.

"That is what I wanted to say. Yes, a vocabulary of three hundred words. And it is enough. Food and drink, heat and cold, joy and sorrow, even life and death—that is enough. What more?"

"You made the compilation, you counted the words?"

"Yes, years ago, when I was first with them. I—I haven't thought much about it lately."

"No reason why you should," Holcomb interposed. "And there's no reason why you should dwell upon it now." He leaned across the table and patted Elston's arm. "All that's a closed chapter—over and done with."

It appeared to Mason that Elston shrank under Holcomb's touch, yet was heartened by it.

"I know, I know," he said; and when Holcomb's hand was withdrawn, he straightened his shoulders and sat more erect in his chair. There were no more lapses in his conduct as the dinner progressed, no more breaches of the code of civilized man at meat. Holcomb assumed the burden of the conversation, and through his talk, which touched upon many themes, ran the thread of one dominating thought—the completeness of the severance of the ties which might have bound Elston to the wild life, and the foreordained certainty of his return to civilization.

The idea was held before Elston, repeated again and again, and impressed upon him by sheer force of reiteration. It was mingled with the news of friends whom he was to see again; it was part of all the gossip of that world of which he was once more to be a part. Yet Holcomb's talk was no lecture, no monologue; it was contrived with exceeding art to draw Elston out, to lead him to speak of the old scenes and the old interests. It betrayed an amazingly intimate knowledge of what had been his likes and his dislikes—a knowledge so complete and so unfailing that Mason began to suspect the source of the splendid coaching Holcomb must have received.

Somebody had worked hard, and success was crowning the work. Elston, assailed at many points, was yielding to the attack. He began to speak more freely; subtle suggestions waked long-sleeping memories; words for years unused were again upon his lips—nouns and verbs first, then the broadly qualifying adjectives and adverbs, then a few expressing more delicate shades of meaning, ventured upon cautiously, but with no mistakes. So Elston was helped to make his way back from the land where three hundred words sufficed for the simple life.

It was Mason's business to study Elston, but it was with more than merely professional concern that he watched the man struggling back, guided by the capable hand of Holcomb, helped over the rough places, avoiding stumbling-blocks and pitfalls, and accepting more and more unquestioningly the decision as to his future. A strong man was leading a weak man, but every step of the path they followed had been surveyed and mapped. It was a triumph of calculation, cold, deliberate calculation, in which human sympathy figured as only an incidental factor in the problem. The perfection of the preparations jarred Mason's sense of justice. The weak man had no chance. His side of the case, if such a side there were, was totally disregarded. The clothes he wore had been put upon him to remind him of what he had been—and what he was to be again. His hair and beard had been cut in the fashion in which he had worn them years before. The service of the dinner, which evidently had been ordered with painstaking care, was of a sort to recall the pleasant luxuries of the old existence. No detail, however trifling, had been overlooked. The very cigars which the deft waiter brought in with the coffee were of the brand Elston had affected. Mason saw his eyes light as he took one from the box, and in pure fellowship of the Brotherhood of the Weed proffered him a match. But Holcomb stayed the little civility. For an instant Elston hesitated. Then his hand strayed to a pocket of his waistcoat, and he drew a match-safe from what had been its accustomed place. Another chord of memory had been touched.

Elston inhaled a great volume of smoke, and expelled it slowly. He moved his chair back from the table, and glanced at his companions with a change of manner.

"It is five years since I smoked a cigar," he said, "but I find the old taste lingers."

"You'll find other tastes survive as well," Holcomb hastened to assure him.

Elston smiled, enigmatically.

"You mean that I may—may gratify them?" There was hesitation in picking the word, but the pause was barely perceptible. "Well, I admit their—their lure. You must not think I gave up the old life because I did not like it. I merely found I liked the new better."

"IN THE DOORWAY STOOD A WOMAN, A TALL, GRACEFUL FIGURE, IN A CLINGING GOWN OF WHITE."

"Oh, the charm of novelty."

Holcomb's phrase was ill chosen. Elston's face darkened.

"Not that," said he. "It was stronger; it grew. It took a hold—no, a grip—on me. Yet I am going to give it up. That should go far, doctor"—he turned to Mason—"it should go far to help you believe I may be sane."

"My dear fellow!" Mason began; but Elston interrupted him.

"Holcomb was right. I did what he could not understand. So he brought a doctor to—to observe the suspect. That is as it should be. Now, I tell you both the plain truth: I dropped out by choice. I am going back because—because circumstances are too strong for me to—to resist. On that statement you must judge my sanity. I won't try to explain why I chose one life above the other; you couldn't understand, either of you. Perhaps you are no nearer understanding why I go back now; but I think my going will aid you in acquitting me of madness."

Holcomb rose. His face was very grave.

"Elston," he said, "Elston, I am going to treat you as a man thoroughly in possession of his faculties. I have told you some things to show how completely your old place is waiting for you. Now it seems to me the moment has come for you to receive the same message from another, whose words must carry far greater weight than mine."

Elston sprang to his feet; but if he meant to detain Holcomb, he was too late. The other had stepped to the door and thrown it open. And again Mason was left to marvel at the precision of the arrangements. In the doorway stood a woman, a tall, graceful figure, in a clinging gown of white. Mason knew Mrs. Elston slightly. He had often heard her called a handsome woman and rarely a charming woman; but now he could have denied her neither beauty nor charm, and he was keenly alive to the tact with which she dealt with a difficult situation. She moved towards Elston, a welcoming smile on her face, her arms outstretched. She laid her hands upon his shoulders, and the man, his face grown very white, put an arm about her and kissed her forehead. No tears, no reproaches, no passionate outburst—a seemly meeting of husband and wife after a brief separation and in the presence of witnesses, unavoidable, if friendly. Mason had a sensation of watching a scene, very pretty, very artistic, very unreal. It fitted smoothly, all too smoothly, into the programme. Elston was to come back to his own; there were to be no complaints, no heartburnings; there was to be no talk of forgiveness, because the things which might be forgiven were to be ignored. It was the best course, no doubt, and the wisest; but Mason, confirmed bachelor and specialist in ailments of the mind, had stubborn doubts of its efficacy in the more obscure and complicated troubles of the heart. Yet it was well done, marvellously well done.

"She's a wonder, Holcomb," he said, presently, to his friend, when, with all decent despatch, they had left the restored couple to themselves.

Holcomb nodded.

"She's managed this case most skilfully," he said. "You haven't heard of any Elston scandal, have you? No, indeed. She saw to it there shouldn't be any. All you knew—all anybody knew—was that Elston had to go away for his health. That was true, but I can't say as much for the impression that got abroad that he wasn't any better, and so couldn't come back. In six months she lost track of him. She hadn't anything to go on but an intuitive belief that he was still alive when she sent a note to the college faculty, in his name, resigning his job on the ground that the probable time of his recovery was too uncertain to warrant him in holding the place longer. Their closest friends have supposed she spent much time with him—she's travelled a lot, as you may know—but the fact is, that for a dozen years she didn't know whether he was on the earth or under it. Finally she got a clue—a mighty blind clue. It took me three years to run it down for her and find the man."

"Then she really wished him found?"

"Yes, she did," Holcomb said, deliberately. "There were reasons, sufficient reasons, without taking up any sentimental considerations. For one thing, she was tired of being a grass-widow, to put it bluntly. Even the cleverest of women can't drape that situation so that it will always be satisfying to public curiosity, and when a woman's as attractive as Mrs. Elston, the complications increase. Then there was a trust fund that was about ripe for a division, and that meant she'd have to make some sort of showing about this husband of hers, who was one of the beneficiaries. Yes, viewing the case in all its aspects, it was clear the tangle would have to be straightened one way or the other."

"The other?"

"Divorce, if he wouldn't come back. But she'd rather have the man."

"I dare say she still loves him."

Holcomb grunted.

"I haven't been talking mere affection," he said. "They married young, but I don't know that it was a 'Romeo and Juliet' affair at that. Then, too, there was a chance for her to make allowances. This wild-man business is in Elston's blood, so to speak; uncle of his did much the same trick. I suppose they gave the boy a hot-house bringing up—never let him have a taste of the open. So, when he got one, he was the worse smitten. You see what happened: he reverted to barbarism."

"And the poor devil had about as much chance against you as a barbarian would have against the German army," Mason said, with a touch of impatience. "There's a deadly completeness about your campaign that gets on the nerves. Shoes figured out to fit him, his old brand of cigars, the match-box in its regular pocket, to say nothing of the deputy and the warrant to be served, if necessary——"

"For non-support of his wife," Holcomb explained.

"And food he liked," Mason went on, "a wing of this hotel specially chartered, a medical man on the spot to guess at his degree of sanity, and then at the last the wife showing up at the psychological moment. I tell you, Holcomb, it's too one-sided."

"That's usually the condition when a barbarian gets on civilization's right of way," Holcomb commented. "Well, I admit the plans were complete."

"It looks that way," Mason agreed, almost gloomily. "I dare say that's what civilization's plans ought to do. But I can't help feeling a bit sorry for that girl—the one we left in the valley, you know. Still, she doesn't count. Very likely she's hardly what you'd call civilized."

"Civilized or not, she'll be provided for adequately," Holcomb said, curtly.

"And the wife? Does she know?"

The lawyer shrugged his shoulders.

"She's practical. She understands the likelihood of there having been some such entanglement."

"But does she know?" Mason said.

"She asks no unnecessary questions. But what's your opinion of his mental condition?"

"Oh, he's sane—sane enough," Mason said. "You've given him a tremendous mental jar, Holcomb. You've tried to unmake in an evening what's been years in the making. He's stood the test. He has been able 'to come back,' as our sporting friends say. In an hour or two you've made him prove the survival of the civilized man in him. You've shown him the way, and he has followed it. He has picked up the old speech, the old habits. It's a far cry, Holcomb, from gulping soup from a plate to sipping a *demi-tasse*, but—well, you saw what you saw and you heard what you heard. He told you the truth. He's given up what he likes best, not what you may like best or what I may like best, mind you, but what *he* likes best, because he recognizes the cold logic of facts. He isn't happy, but he'll do it. The odds are too great; it isn't a fair fight. I feel like one of the two villains in the old story, but I'm glad I'm the villain of milder mood. I'll do the little I can for him. I'll give you a parallel case. Picture a man with a hereditary weakness for alcohol, who, carefully guarded through his youth, as a young man plunges into dissipation. In middle life he's corralled by his friends. They impress upon him the advantages of sobriety. He sees the advantages; he admits them. He says frankly he likes rum, but understands it doesn't pay, and he'll quit it. Elston's conduct hasn't been that of the average man; but, if you'll pardon the comparison, his wife's management of the affair hasn't been that of the average woman."

Holcomb glanced at his watch.

"We'll give her an even hour with him," he said. "Then we'll see if she has completed the cure."

When the two men went back to the dining-room it was to come upon a pretty scene of domestic accord. Elston and his wife sat side by side before the fire, and, unless Mason's eyes tricked him, the woman was withdrawing her hand from her husband's clasp as they entered. She looked up, smiling brightly.

"Louis and I have been very busy making plans," she said. "And we agree perfectly. He assures me that his health is absolutely restored, but it has occurred to both of us that he might be the better for a winter in southern France."

"I think that would be very wise," Holcomb said.

"It seems the best course," Elston said. He added, "I think—yes, I'm sure—I cannot do better than place myself in the hands of my friends."

"Indeed, you cannot," his wife said, quickly. "You may trust Mr. Holcomb and Dr. Mason implicitly."

"And you—yes, you most of all, Elaine!" Elston cried. He caught her hand and held it till she gently freed it and rose to her feet.

"HE WAS GAZING SPELLBOUND AT ONE OF THE WINDOWS. MASON, GLANCING IN

THE SAME DIRECTION, HAD A GLIMPSE OF A FACE PRESSED AGAINST THE PANE."

There was a new touch of colour in her cheeks as she moved across the room. Elston, too, had risen, and, though he did not follow her, his eyes rested upon her with a sort of fascination. Beside the piano Mrs. Elston paused.

"Of course you men have things to discuss," she said, "and therefore I leave you to your own devices—for a little. But late hours are forbidden."

"We can very quickly dispose of such matters as we have in hand, Mrs. Elston," Holcomb said, gravely.

"Yes, very quickly, Elaine," Elston said, his gaze still upon her. Her fingers softly touched the keys of the piano. It was only a fragment that she played, a few bars of an air Mason did not recognize; but he noted the start her husband gave, and from some corner of his brain came a memory that once he had heard Elston was singularly impressionable to music. And so this was only another proof of the elaborateness of the plans made by a clever man and a cleverer woman to win back a wanderer! Poor barbarian! Not a chance in a hundred had he. Mason glanced from the man to the woman. Mrs. Elston had moved to the door, and was standing there, a charming figure, an alluring figure, one tapering arm raised slightly, and the hand resting upon the edge of the door, her eyes bright, the delicate flush still upon her cheeks.

"I bid you good night, gentlemen," she said. "And, Louis—you will not be long?"

Elston glanced at the clock.

"In five minutes, Elaine," he said. His face was pale, but his voice was steady.

As the door closed, Holcomb said:—

"Old man, you've made the right choice. And having made it, you can go abroad with an easy mind. There's no need to discuss details. I'll attend to all arrangements. You understand?"

"I understand," Elston told him. "Yes, I understand. Money will do—what money can do. You're a fair man. The matter could be in no better hands."

"Thank you," Holcomb answered; and for a moment there was silence in the room. The three men could hear a dash of rain upon the long windows; there was a sound of rising wind in the branches of the trees; then came the bark of a dog, a deep, melancholy baying. Mason, watching Elston, saw him start. Holcomb, the practical, neither heeded nor, indeed, saw.

"Elston," he said, "I ought to tell you frankly you've taken this thing well, mighty well. You'll go back to the place in the world that belongs to you, and you'll find your path has been made clear."

"Yes," Elston answered.

He was gazing spellbound at one of the windows. Mason, glancing in the same direction, had a glimpse of a face pressed against the pane—of big, black eyes, pleading eyes, eyes that were full of wretchedness and grief. Then there came a cry, not loud, but thrilling in its appeal.

"What's that?" Holcomb exclaimed, and wheeled towards the window. Mason took a step forward, with extended arm, but was too late. Elston had answered the call. A bound had carried him half across the room, and then he had plunged through glass and sash, and was gone.

They ran to the window, but civilized man sometimes hesitates to follow where barbarian has led. The jagged panes barred their way. Holcomb, with an oath, was struggling with the lock of the window when he became aware that Mrs. Elston was at his shoulder, peering out with them into the gloom of the night. At the entrance to the hotel grounds an arc-light burned; its beams suddenly fell upon three figures, a man and a woman, hand in hand, running through the storm, and a great dog bounding beside them.

Mrs. Elston was first of those in the room to regain self-mastery. She held herself proudly when Holcomb turned to face her, and her voice was cold and even.

"It is now the other alternative," she said. "You will be so good as to file the papers in the action for divorce at once."

She swept out of the room like a princess, leaving two men who eyed each other.

"Holcomb," Mason said, at last, "I'm sorry for you. I won't touch on the merits of the case itself, but I bear tribute to the completeness of your plans. It was civilization against barbarism, as you said, and by all the rules of the game you should have won. Who'd have reckoned on even a girl savage making a thirty-mile pursuit on foot? She was the one factor you disregarded, and——"

"Eh? What's that?" said the lawyer.

"Why, the woman! Barbarian or civilized, she's the one uncertain quantity."

Holcomb shook his head.

"Mason, you're wrong," he said, with a mirthless smile. "There have been two women here to-night. One may have been uncertain enough, but the other, I tell you, was as deadly certain as the civilization of the centuries could make her."

The Fine Art of Making a War-Film.

By W. HEATH ROBINSON.

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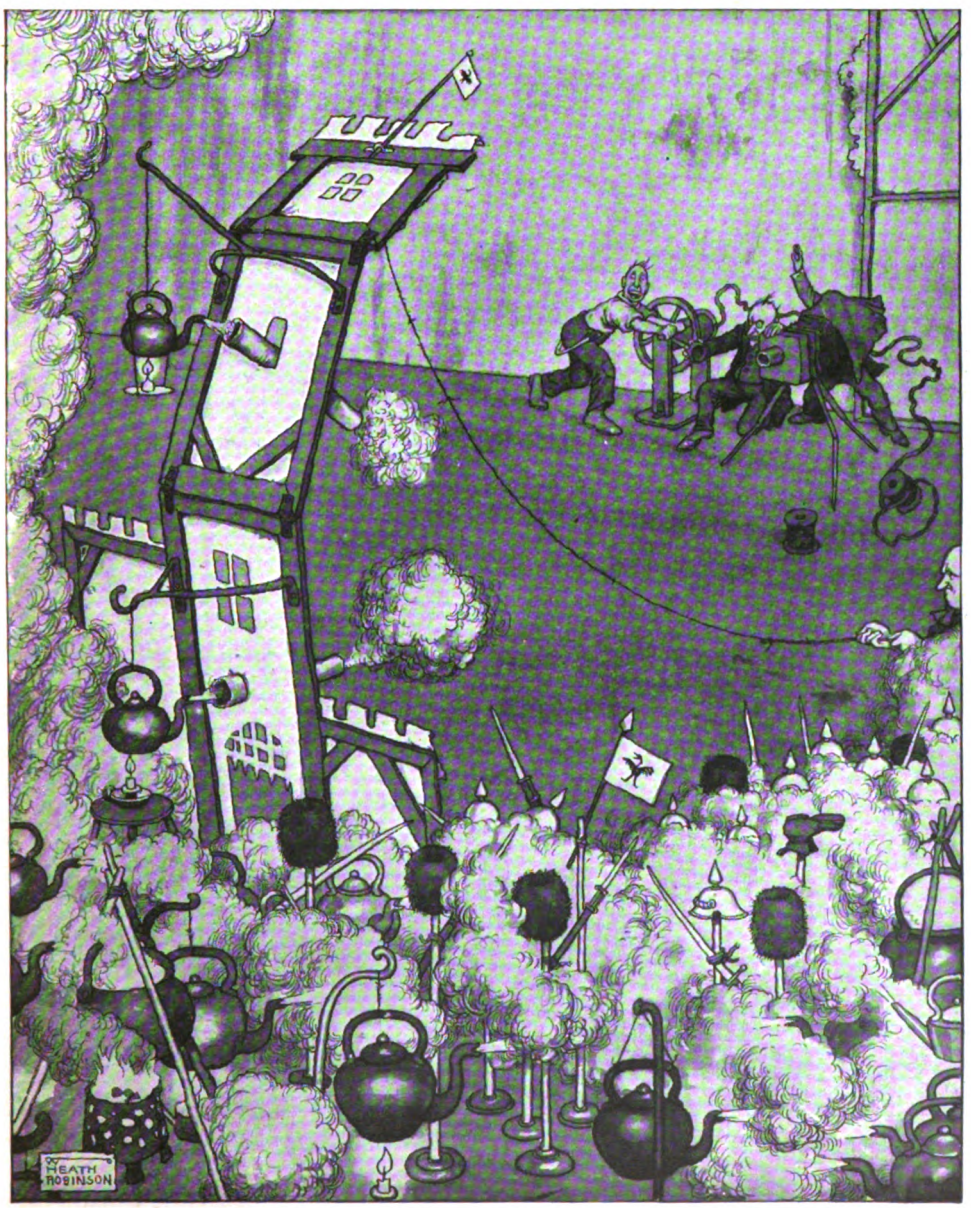

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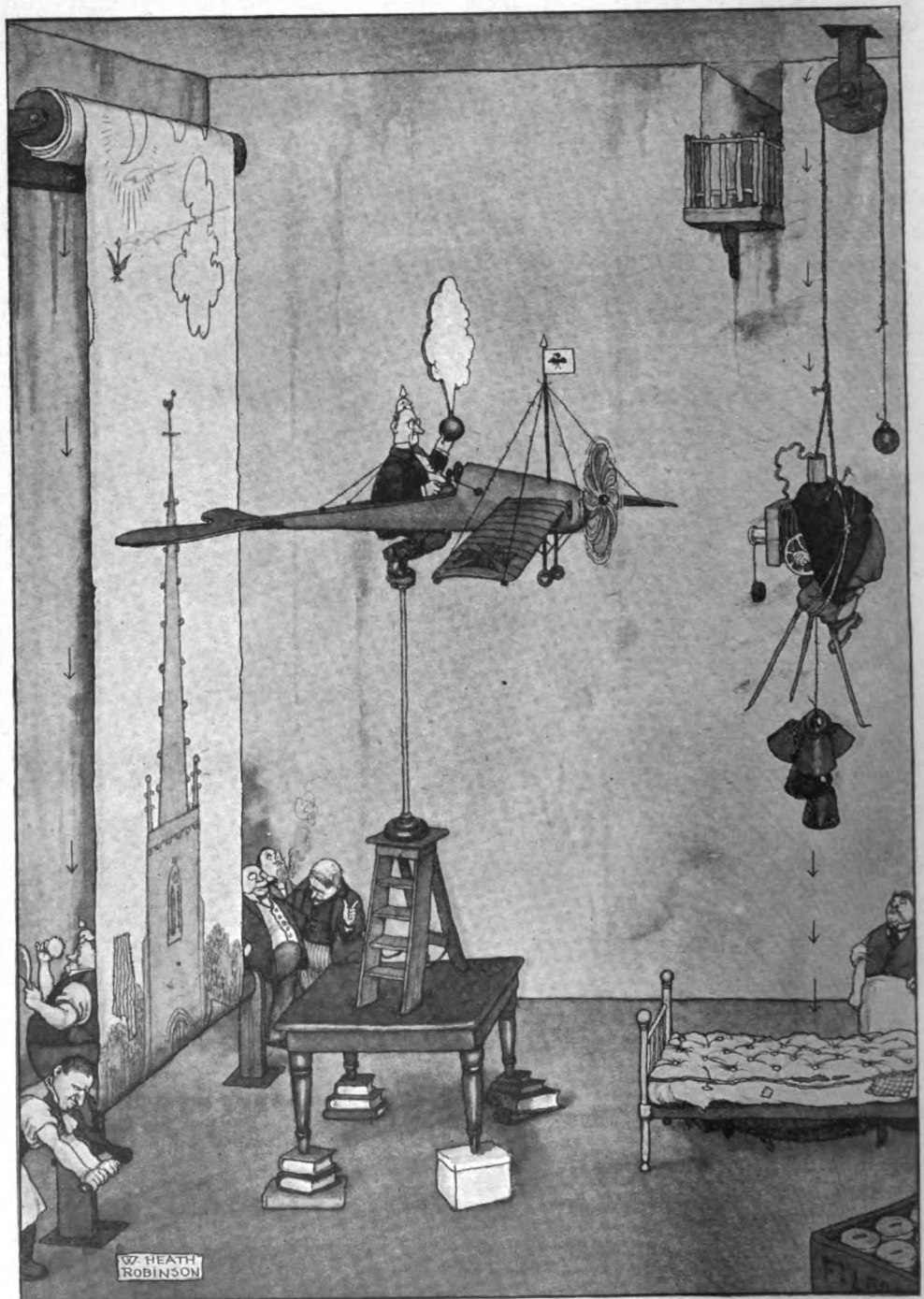

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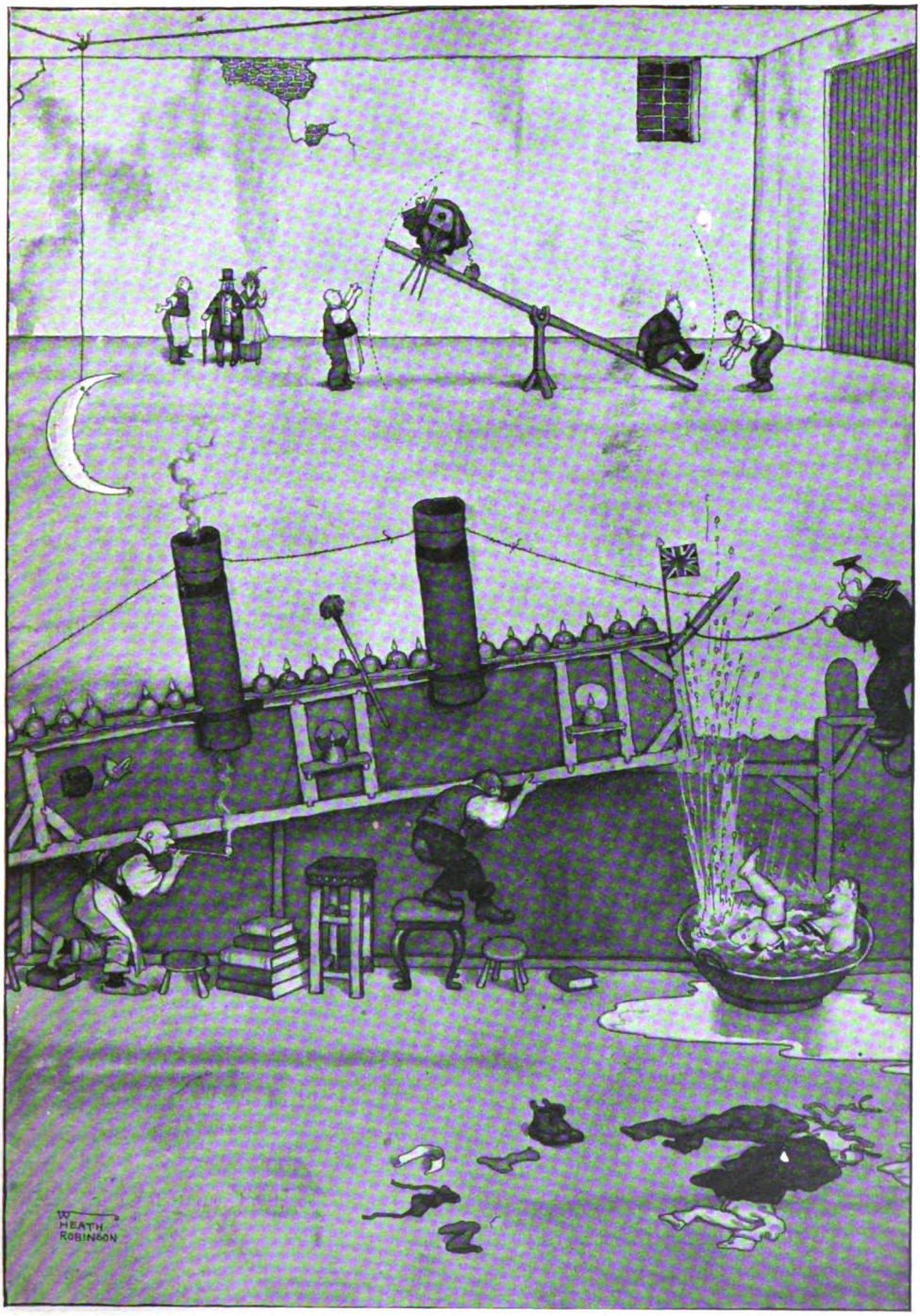

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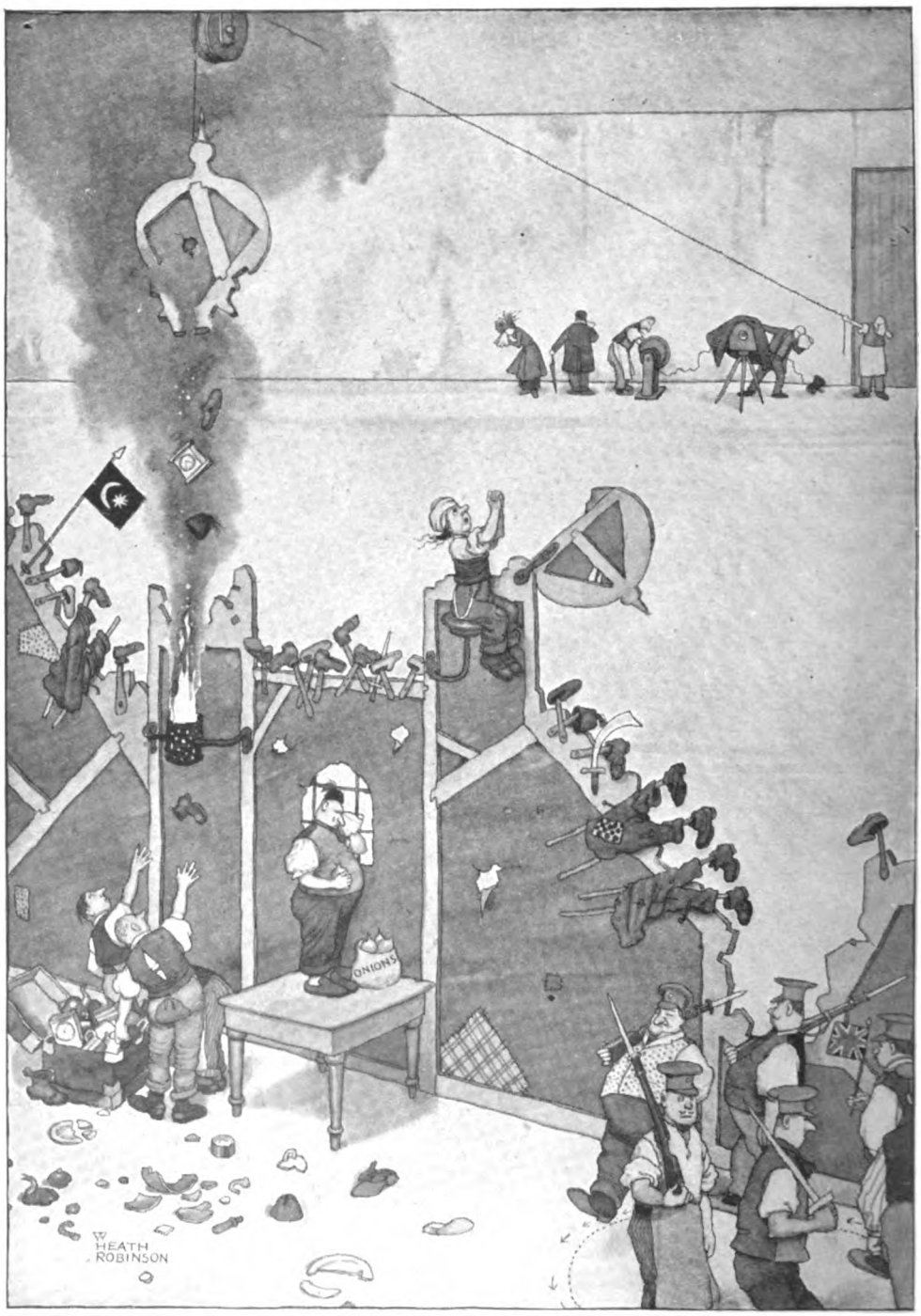

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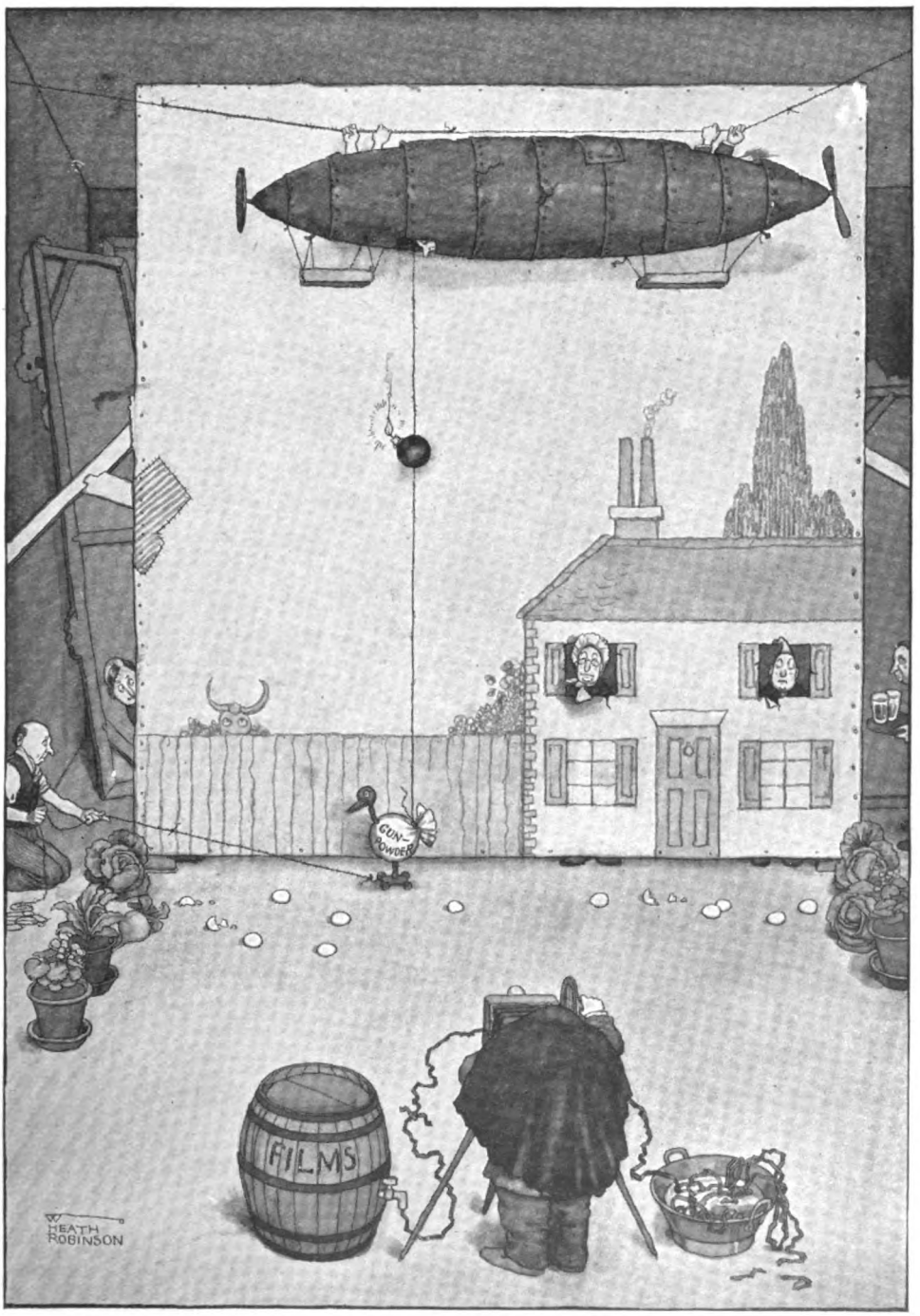

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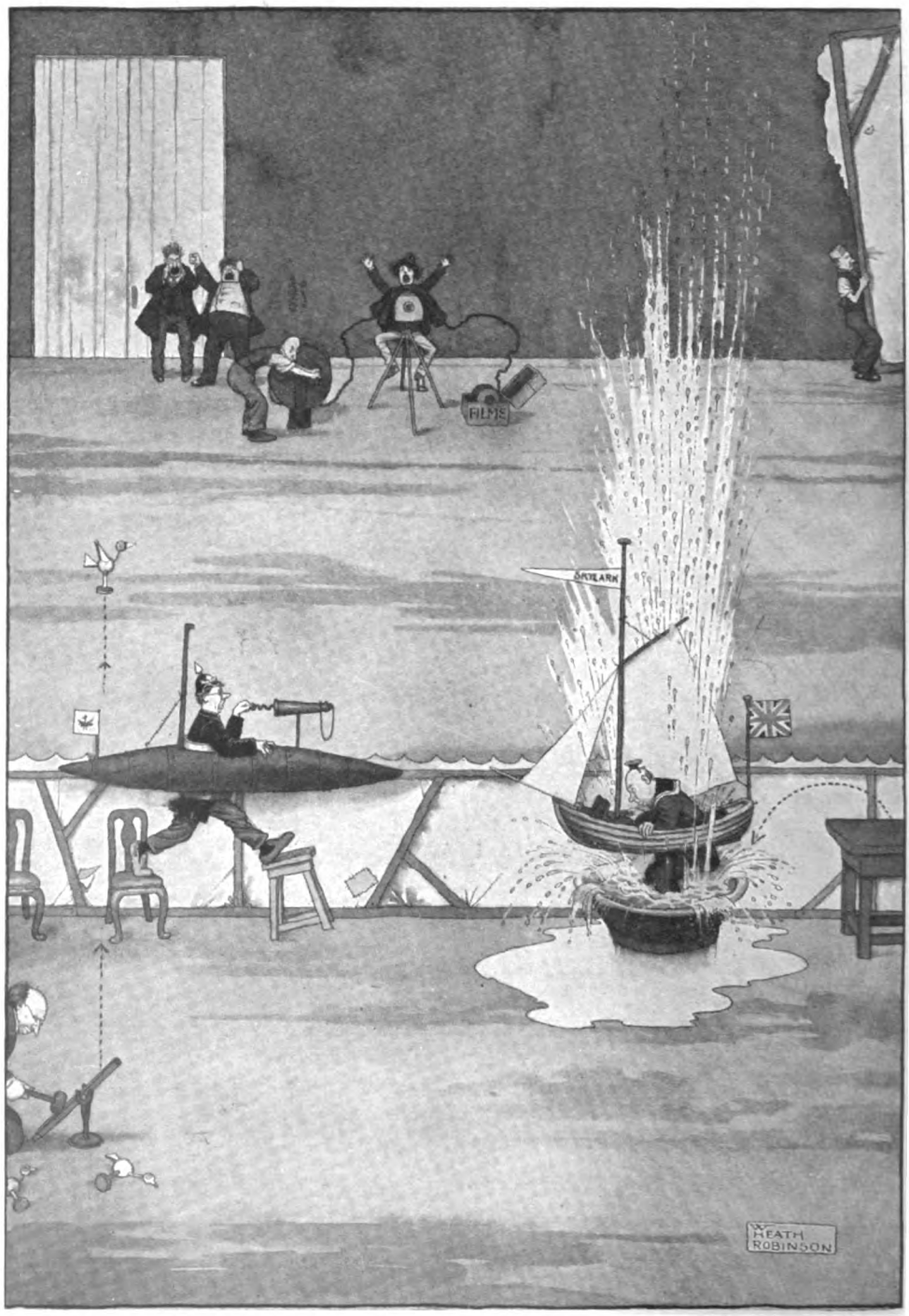

GERMAN SUBMARINE SINKING PLEASURE-BOAT OFF BRIGHTON.

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THE HELL-PACKET.

By PERCEVAL GIBBON.

Illustrated by E. S. Hodgson.

IT was in the second dog watch, while the *Etna*, with all sail set, held her course strongly over a sunset-saddened sea, that Mr. Fant, her chief mate, came forward on a tour of the gear.

Supper was over in the forecastle, and the men of the watch below had joined their fellows about the fore-hatch in that hour consecrated by sea-usage to leisure. With their pipes alight, they sprawled or sat at their brief ease; the red of the sky lit with its flush the diversity of their tanned and serious faces, while beyond the leaning lee rail the water, marbled with foam, sped by like a broad current, and over them the foot of the foresail bent in a quivering arch. Their talk, flitting in snatches from one to the other of them, was low-toned and guttural, for the *Etna's* reputation among seamen—they called her familiarly "the hell-packet"—made it difficult for her to ship Americans and Englishmen, and most of her crew were "Dutchmen" of one kind or another. At the rail, apart from the others, Noble and Goodwin, the only two men in the port watch who were not Dutchmen, stood together in talk.

Old Noble, white-haired, neat as a housewife, even in his working clothes, with the mark of forty and odd years of seafaring on every line of his wind-bitten countenance and in every posture of his spare body, lifted to the warm light of the sunset a face that was bitter and weary. The left side of it was disfigured with an eye bruised and blackened by a blow; the mild and venerable aspect of him made it the more startling and monstrous.

"I told him"—he was explaining to Goodwin—"I *told* him the mizzen royal was braced up too tight to steer by, an' he never even looked aloft to see how it was. He didn't say a word. He just ups with his fist an'—an'——"

Goodwin nodded, his eyes on the old rigid face that dodged his look as if in shame. He was a tallish man, something less than thirty years of age, a seaman to the tips of his big, work-roughened fingers. He had been shanghaied for the voyage in San Francisco—drugged, that is, and carried on board unconscious—and neither his fine strength nor his real efficiency as a sailor had availed to save him from the *Etna's* tradition of ill-treating her crews.

"An' all the time," old Noble broke out suddenly, with a quick clenching of his brows at the recollection, "all the time the Old Woman was sittin' there, in her chair by the weather rail, clickin' away at her darned knitting, an' never even lifted her eyes to see what the row was. Me with blood all over my face and my cheek stove in, an' she never bats an eye—just knits on, makin' socks!"

Words seemed to fail him; he stared away across the waters to where the horizon glowed with the hues of wrath and fire. It was of the captain's wife he spoke, the silent grey woman whose presence on board the ship touched her grisly fame with horror. Wherever seamen congregated she was spoken of and cursed—the woman in whose presence men were broken and humbled, who never by look nor word showed that she was aware of their agony and shame.

"Call that a *woman*," old Noble was beginning again, when Goodwin touched him on the arm and motioned him to silence. The talk of the Dutchmen on the hatch had

broken off abruptly in the middle of a word; one or two who were lying at full length sat up awkwardly; and Mr. Fant appeared around the corner of the deck-house, walking with the deliberate and noiseless steps which were among his characteristics. He had a clean-shaven, elderly face shaped to a wooden primness and impassivity; he stooped in the shoulders like a scholar; his eyes were pale and remorseless. The great strength of the man and his unholy prowess as a driver and oppressor of seamen appeared not all in his outward aspect; he carried them like concealed weapons, ready for use upon a moment's need. On the seamen, whom his mere presence had stricken to silence, whose eyes followed his every motion, he spent not a glance. As though they had been mere cattle, his gaze passed them by as it roved from one item of the gear to another; he was as if alone, the sole human and sovereign being that lived on those broad decks.

"Look at him, will you?" whispered Goodwin to his companion.

Noble drew a deep breath. "Look at the Dutchmen," he murmured in reply.

The men on the hatch were still enough as Mr. Fant, almost within arm's length of the nearest of them, paused to inspect the foresheet, but as Goodwin watched he saw that nudges, nods, furtive smiles passed to and fro among them. There was scarcely one of them that had not felt the weight of the mate's hand; they went commonly about decks under his eye like driven and desperate beasts; even in the forecastle in their watch below they seemed scarcely to dare to speak of him. Now, behind his back, they were jibing at him among themselves.

"Something's up," breathed Goodwin, and old Noble nodded. It was the mate who had struck him in the face and blackened his eye; his face, as he watched him now, was as blank of expression as the mate's own.

Mr. Fant, still with his manner of being alone, passed to the ladder and so up to the forecastle head. As his back, in its neat loose jacket, receded, talk broke out again among the men in guarded tones, so that even Noble and Goodwin, where they stood by the rail, could hear nothing of what was being said.

"Something's up," repeated Goodwin. "Those Dutchmen are framing something. They've kept it pretty quiet."

Old Noble grunted. "I'm not blamin' them," he answered. "They can heave the blighter overboard for all I care."

From the poop the bell before the wheel rang shrilly, tapping out eight bells. The men roused themselves to movement for the muster aft that begins the night at sea. The man who was to relieve the wheel dived into the starboard forecastle for his coat and a chew of tobacco; the others were crowded together on the weather side of the hatch before moving aft in a body. It was at this moment that Mr. Fant came down the ladder again.

Everybody's back was towards him; it is possible that with the arrival of eight bells, which released one watch to its sleep and summoned the other to four hours of duty, the men had forgotten him. However it was, there was a man standing at the foot of the ladder directly in his path. Mr. Fant, three steps from the deck, paused and took hold of the handrail, and for a moment surveyed the check-shirted back in front of him. Goodwin, who turned in time to see the incident from the other side of the deck, saw Mr. Fant make a movement as of irritated disgust—just such a start and shrug as a man makes who is suddenly aware of an insect crawling over him. Then, without a word, without a curse that might have humanized the deed, he kicked. His neatly-booted foot, with the mate's vicious strength behind it, took the man just above the small of the back.

His yell and his leap forward startled the waiting men; they spun round, to see him collapse upon the hatch, rolling to and fro with a hand against his back in uncontrollable pain, and Mr. Fant, standing on the ladder looking down on them with an unmoved face. He had not even been angry; in his strange code of life, one need not even have anger as a reason for kicking an unsuspecting man violently in the back. It sufficed that he was the mate of the *Etna* and the sufferer a sailor before the mast. The men he faced were numerous enough to tear him to pieces with their hands, but under his gaze none moved. Only old Noble, across the deck, clicked his tongue softly between his teeth in a sort of dreary wonder.

They faced each other, the prim, composed officer and the sullen, uncertain men, for perhaps the space of three slow breaths and no word was spoken, save for the choking German oaths of the man who had been kicked. It seemed to Goodwin, watching the scene, as though the tension of it must break in an uproar of murderous frenzy. But Mr. Fant knew better. He cleared his throat deliberately.

"All hands aft!" he ordered quietly, in

his tones of everyday command, and came down the ladder.

The mere habit of obedience made some of the men move away at once; the others, slower to be compelled by it, shuffled undecidedly. But Mr. Fant, resuming again his manner of not being aware of their existence, walked at them, and they fell apart to make way for him, and he passed through them, walking with his leisurely and silent tread towards the poop. Their stupefied faces turned to follow his tidy, lean figure as he departed; it seemed that they had been assaulted first and then outfaced. Some one among them with a rueful sense of humour even vented a spirt of laughter.

Goodwin had the fashion of mind that fastens closely upon the immediate event. For him not the least strange part of the whole affair was the straggling of the crew aft to the muster—going in silent knots and groups, and followed at an interval by the man who had been kicked, with his hand yet pressed to his back and his face strange and contorted with pain. He stood to answer his name where the yellow light from the cabin alleyway shed its feeble illumination upon the deck, leaving dark and stark the figures of the two officers and the captain on the poop above. His clenched lips seemed to smile sardonically.

"Meyer!" called the second mate, running down the list.

"*Ja*, sir," answered the man who had been kicked, with a gasp that sounded like a splutter of bitter mirth that would not be restrained.

In the forecastle presently, when the watch had been dismissed, he showed his back, standing stripped under the swinging slush-lamp and between the tiers of bunks. Goodwin, who was already in bed, leaned forth above the heads of the others and watched the scene. The lamp dragged its retinue of tangled shadows to and fro; between them the darkling faces of the thronged men leaped into view and were dim again, and in the middle, stark and white, there stood the naked body of him who had been kicked, with his head turned to speak to those who inspected his injury, his unkempt fair beard crushed between his chin and his bare shoulder. They crowded to look at it, a darkening and swollen bruise, standing strangely up from the smooth skin; but it was little they said. Once or twice Goodwin caught quick glances turned towards himself; he had a feeling that more would have been spoken but for his presence and that of Noble.

"I t'ink first I was shot," the injured man was explaining; "it made so mooch pain to me. An' den I fall on der hatch an' see him lookin' down like dat. An' I ain't done not'ing—not'ing!"

Grunts and nods from his fellows answered him; Goodwin lay back on his pillow to avoid their sidelong glances of suspicion.

"Ach!" exclaimed a tow-haired youth among them; "soon he vill kick no more."

He ceased suddenly to talk, as if someone had nudged him forcibly, and the men began to climb into their bunks.

When at midnight they went on deck again, it was to find the topgallant sails furled and the ship thrusting into a brisk sea under a sky of unrelieved black. They mustered aft in oilskins, a little crowd of bulky and swollen figures, unrecognizable to each other in the dark, and almost immediately the mate's order took them to the lee fore-brace, and there were twenty minutes of hauling to usher in their four hours on deck. Noble was at the wheel, and Goodwin, hauling among the others to the long and melancholy twining cry of the foremost man, heard whispers passing among them—whispers in a foreign tongue. From the weather side of the deck Mr. Fant gave his orders to haul and belay in his unvarying curt and precise tones. He was alone with the men upon those decks that seemed to rustle and crepitate with conspiracy; they were nine to one and sore with suppressed hate and festering revenge; there would be none to accuse them, no witness of any kind, if they should throw him over the side to drown in the wet dark of the Pacific; yet he moved and worked and commanded them as though he were invincible and inviolable.

"The swine's a man, anyway," thought Goodwin to himself.

He was coiling up the fore weather braces when Mr. Fant came for'ard again, his long oilskin coat swishing rhythmically about his shins to his step, his sou'wester enveloping his face like a hood. Even thus disguised and masked he was formidable in his quality.

"Coil 'em down on deck," he directed Goodwin, shortly.

"Aye, aye, sir," responded Goodwin, formally, and flung a heavy coil aft the bollard on which he had hung it.

Mr. Fant moved on, as though to go round between the foremast and the break of the forecastle head and aft along the lee side; six steps beyond Goodwin brought him abreast of the corner of the deck-house. Some instinct, or perhaps something telepathic in the

"FOR A MINUTE OR MORE THEY HAMMERED AND SNATCHED AT EACH OTHER, SLIDING TO AND FRO BETWEEN THE DECK-HOUSE AND THE SCUPPERS."

passions that surged in the thing that happened, made Goodwin turn, in the act of flemishing down a brace upon the deck, to look after him. In the darkness of that squally night Mr. Fant, a couple of fathoms away from him, was already a vague shape; there was a sound like a man grunting in heavy effort, a sort of thud, and Mr. Fant came staggering back on his heels and fell at Goodwin's feet. At the same moment some heavy object thumped across the deck and rolled into the scuppers. Forward, beyond the house, the darkness was alive with indeterminable shapes of moving men.

"Ah!" Mr. Fant, at Goodwin's feet, came to a sitting posture on the planks with a strong rustling of his long oilskin coat. His back was towards Goodwin and the night was very dark; the seaman did not understand the queer fumbling movement he made till his right arm swung up and there was the bang and flash of the revolver which he had drawn. He was shooting at large at the men who moved in the darkness forward.

"Hi!" shouted Goodwin, as the pistol spat a second time, and came at a slithering run along the wet planks to where Mr. Fant still sat. The mate did not even turn his head; the shapes forward had become invisible; and he was balancing the revolver at the end of his bent arm ready to shoot at the first that should reappear. Goodwin slipped as he came up to him, recovered his balance with a huge effort, and kicked with one sea-booted foot at the mate's right hand. He felt his toe strike crisply on metal and heard the weapon clatter on the planks; and then he had leisure to observe nothing more, for Mr. Fant jerked his feet from under him and he was down on the wet planks, fighting for his life. But even in the urgency of the struggle, he realized with amazement that Mr. Fant had spoken no word.

For a minute or more they hammered and snatched at each other, sliding to and fro between the deck-house and the scuppers, and in that minute Mr. Fant had the best of it. He could fight like a wild-cat; he seemed to be made of hickory and steel, with fists of stone; his blows flew like hail. It was mere good fortune—and possibly the darkness—that saved Goodwin from being put out of action by the first of them. They rained on him like blows from a bludgeon; the mate appeared to be all round him, incredibly active and dangerous, and his own blows seemed feeble and vain as he delivered them. Then, as they bumped together against the rail, he felt his fist strike bare flesh, and opened his hand to lay hold of it. The mate's knee jarred into the pit of his stomach; jabbing fingers, feeling for his eyes, struck him in the cheek. He buried his face in Mr. Fant's oilskin bosom, got a hold on his throat, which he held with both hands and put out his strength.

"You fool!" he croaked, as he lay gripping and panting. "You fool! I wasn't aimin' to kill ye—only to stop ye from shootin'. An' now them Dutchmen'll ha' got yer gun."

Under his hands Mr. Fant seemed to choke. Goodwin raised his head and looked at the mate's face, slackening his grip warily.

"D'ye hear me?" he demanded. "If I wanted to kill ye I'd want to do it right—not when ye're down already. That's your style; it ain't mine. Now them Dutchmen's got your gun, an' you bet it's for you they'll be keepin' it. See? You got to watch out after this, Mister Mate; the bulldosin' game don't go any more."

The chin-strap of the mate's sou'wester had been carried away in the struggle and his face was clear, a long oval of pallor in the darkness under the rail, with smudges and streaks of blackness upon it. He seemed to look up at Goodwin thoughtfully before he replied.

"You won't get another chance as good as this," he said, at last, speaking hoarsely through his strained throat.

"Eh?" said Goodwin. "Can't you see I'm—I'm making you a present of yer darn life?"

Mr. Fant shifted his arms. "Get off," he said. "Get off, can't you! Let me get up."

Goodwin stood up. "As you say, sir," he answered. "Shall I give you a hand?"

But Mr. Fant rejected his hand and rose staggeringly to his feet unassisted. He stood for some moments holding by the rail, drawing deep breaths. It is probable that he had never before been so near to death; it is possible that the fact had some place in his thoughts. Goodwin watched him, fascinated; it was altogether consistent with all he knew of him that Mr. Fant should refuse, with curses, to receive mercy. At last Mr. Fant moved and began to go aft, still steadying himself with one hand on the rail. A few paces off he halted and half-turned.

"Coil them braces down on the deck, same as I told you," he said, in his usual quiet tones.

"Aye, aye, sir!" replied Goodwin.

But it was admiration, reluctant but not the less genuine, that kept him standing, the

brace in his hands, looking after Mr. Fant's back till it vanished in the direction of the poop. Mr. Fant was in so many respects the kind of man he would have liked to be himself.

A moment later he was reminded of the heavy object which had felled the mate by stubbing his toe against it. He lifted it; it was a piece of holystone, a boulder as large as his head. He put it over the side; he did not know how far it might serve to incriminate someone, and there was no lack of holystones aboard the *Etna*, anyhow. Then he went on coiling down the braces.

He told Noble what had happened when, at the end of his two hours' "trick," the old man came from the wheel and went to the look-out. The pair of them stood between the anchors, looking forward over the dark, noisy waters towards the sombre sky.

"I could ha' killed him all right," Goodwin explained. "I had him just right. But I let him go."

Noble grunted. "Yes," he said; "you couldn't ha' trusted the Dutchmen if you'd finished him. One of 'em would ha' squeaked, sure."

"It wasn't that," Goodwin protested.

"If it was anything else," said Noble, "you were a fool. If it had been me I'd ha' took my chance o' the Dutchmen even."

It was strange in the forecastle when the watch was over and the men were together again under the slush-lamp. Goodwin came in last and stood inside the door to get out of his wet oilskins; the eyes of the men who crowded the narrow place under the smoky and stinking lamp turned towards him. He faced them, unsmiling and inexpressive, as he unbottoned his stiff oilskin coat; he knew they were doubtful about him, oscillating between confidence, because he had kicked the revolver from the mate's hand, and suspicious, because he had let him go when he might have strangled him to a finish. Among them there must be one who had secured the revolver, whose mere existence among the crew might be sufficient to quell Mr. Fant. Their mean faces were secret and laborious with speculation; they were measuring his value to themselves, wondering whether he, an English-speaking aristocrat of the sea, could be brought to serve the ends of a Dutch plot. But none was sure enough of himself or of Goodwin to speak.

He hung his oilskins on a nail, letting fall a suit that belonged to Brechter, the biggest man on board, to make room for them. Then he spoke across the others to Noble, where the old man lay in his bunk, his pipe in his mouth, silver-white and still, like the corpse of a grandfather.

"There's a lot of darn cowards in this ship, Jim!" he said, in high, aggressive tones, while the Dutchmen gaped to hear him.

Old Noble responded loyally, and yet with a sub-acid intention in his words.

"There is, Dan," he answered. "There is. Fant 'ud be feedin the sharks by now if there wasn't."

Goodwin laughed shortly; he might have expected as much from Noble. With a last look at the Dutchmen—a slow, contemptuous, daunting glare that defied them to question or comment—he climbed into his bunk. He heard them whispering among themselves till he fell asleep.

He had his next clear view of Mr. Fant when he went to take his turn at the wheel for the last two hours of the morning watch, with the sun half-way over the horizon and broad abeam, and all the eastern sky gay with luminous gold. The squally and ill-intentioned night had spent itself; the wind was little and bland; the day came in on a minor key. "Full undt by," said the helmsman whom he relieved, as he went behind him and took the spokes of the wheel from his hands.

"Full and by," echoed Goodwin, loudly and cheerfully. It was the mate's punctilious habit to be always at hand when the wheel was relieved, and Goodwin threw an extra note of cheeriness into his orders because of his presence. The retiring helmsman slouched for'ard, and Goodwin, pulling a spoke down to luff the ship to his taste, let his eyes rest on Mr. Fant's face.

The mate leaned against the bend of the taffrail not half-a-dozen paces from him, looking forward along the ship's side, still and preoccupied with thoughts. He was always neatly clad, with something of a dandy touch in his choice of garments; it helped his effect of remoteness from his stained and laborious watch. He turned his eyes absently upon the wheel at the sound of Goodwin's voice; they were still stony and intent, expressing the unchanged and cruel spirit of the man. Goodwin returned his gaze with a look of frank curiosity, marking that the mate's face was cut and bruised—a great raw gash under the eye, a split lip, and the like. At any rate, though he had let the man live, he had put his mark on him. He grinned slowly. Mr. Fant frowned.

"Watch yer steerin', you!" he ordered, curtly.

"GOODWIN SHOOK HIS HEAD. 'I DON'T KNOW,' HE SAID. 'AN' IF I DID I WOULDN'T TELL. I'M STANDING OUT; YOU AND THEM CAN FIGHT IT OUT BETWEEN YE.'"

"Aye, aye, sir!" answered Goodwin, comfortably. He could steer by the wind on his face and inspect Mr. Fant at the same time. He let the wheel run, braking it with his flattened hand as the ship pulled at her helm, and took back a couple of spokes, continuing all the while to watch the mate.

Mr. Fant frowned with a thoughtful touch.

"Keep your eyes for'ard," he said, presently, in his usual quiet tones. "If you think, because you got hold o' me when I was down last night, that you c'n fly any flag round here, you're wrong. See!"

"No," answered Goodwin. "That don't go. I'm here—an' you know how I came to *be* here—to do my work. I'm a sailor, I am, an' you can't show me anything I don't know about my job. You want to remember that now; the punchin' and kickin' business is finished."

"Is it?" Mr. Fant's cold eye smouldered slowly.

"Yes," said Goodwin. "For me an' Noble it's finished. You got the Dutchmen to reckon with now. You've been hammerin' them a whole lot, an' now one o' them's got your gun, and by an' by he'll get *you*. You see if he don't. I got no use for Dutchmen myself, an' I'm standin' out o' the game. But it don't matter a circumstance to me how soon he gets you."

"Oh!" Mr. Fant considered him inscrutably. "Which of 'em has got it?"

Goodwin shook his head. "I don't know," he said. "An' if I did I wouldn't tell. I'm standin' out; you and them can fight it out between ye."

Mr. Fant stood upright and began to walk slowly to and fro along the poop. Below him the watch was washing down decks; the

clack of the head pump and the swish of brooms along the planks made themselves heard. He seemed to be pondering the problem. Presently he stopped short in the middle of a turn. It was as though he had arrived at a solution and was about to announce it. Goodwin turned his face to him expectantly.

"Mind your steering," said Mr. Fant, shortly, and went forward and down the ladder to his routine work in the main-deck.

Eight bells came duly, and as it rang the captain came on deck from the cabin companion for his before-breakfast taste of the air—a grim, tall old man with sunken, red-rimmed eyes and some infirmity that kept his face twitching as though in momentary spasms of laughter. Duggan, the second mate, a big youth with the face of a prize-fighter, came briskly up the weather ladder as Goodwin, having been relieved, went down on the lee side. He heard the second mate's greeting to the captain and the captain's dyspeptic grunt of reply, and then, as he stepped on to the main-deck, stood rooted at a cry that rose forward. It was vague at first, a single word shouted under the fore-castle head and repeated; then Mr. Fant, spurred to a run at last, came round the deck-house and raced aft, crying out as he came. His face was raised towards the poop where the old captain stood at gaze, startled and wary.

"She's on fire for'ard!" cried Mr. Fant. "On fire! They've set her alight in the fore-hold."

He broke across the deck, making for the weather poop-ladder. Even in that emergency he could not forget that an officer goes on to the poop on the weather side and a mere sailor on the lee. Goodwin, turning to watch, saw him charge up to the captain and speak.

"All hands!" bellowed the captain.

It seemed to Goodwin that his cry had a response from forward, and the response sounded as though many men on the weather side of the house laughed quietly. He went swiftly forward as the two officers and the old captain came clattering down from the poop. He rounded the house and stood in astonishment.

About the fore-hatch the crew was gathered. Both watches were there, leaning against the fife-rail, squatting on the ladders to the fore-castle head, their pipes in their mouths. It had, at eight o'clock in the morning, a dog watch look to it; and there was fire in the fore-hold! To a sailor's eye it was crazy, it was incredible.

"Say, what's this?" he cried.

There was laughter at his question and his surprise. Old Noble, coming from behind him, took his arm. The old man's face, with the gross bruise disfiguring it, was alight and gleeful.

"Come out o' this," he said to Goodwin. "Stand clear and let the Dutchmen stand the racket. They've set her alight an' they're goin' to let her burn."

"Let her burn!" Goodwin repeated the words incredulously, uncomprehendingly. "Let her burn! Why——"

"Come away from them," urged the old man, pulling at him.

He would have resisted, have questioned further, but at that moment there arrived the officers and the captain, Mr. Fant leading. Goodwin suffered Noble to draw him apart from the others and stood watching.

"Off with those hatches!" said Mr. Fant, in nowise varying his ordinary tone or manner. "Quick, now!"

Authority over seamen was so natural to him and expressed itself so perfectly in his tone and his manifest expectation to be obeyed that Goodwin himself nearly stepped forward to carry out the order. Already he could feel through his boots a warmth in the deck on which he stood. It was amazing and unnatural that the Dutchmen should not tumble into agitated activity on the heels of the mate's words. Instead, they stood and squatted unmoved. The gross voice of Brechter, the biggest man aboard, answered mockingly.

"Maybe not," scoffed Brechter.

Mr. Fant stood where he was, rooted and rigid; the captain and the second mate came hurrying up in time to witness the defiance.

"Here!" cried Duggan. "Here, now! Starboard watch there—off wi' them hatches. Want me to start on ye, eh?"

"Yes," said several voices together.

There was no doubt about it—the Dutchmen's plot was a success. Those mild and daunted cattle, who could be driven and beaten by either mate at his will, had found the secret of union and strength. By whispers, unheard by either Goodwin or Noble, they had made themselves from beasts of burden into not only men but masters of their oppressors. Facing Mr. Fant stood Meyer, the man whom, the evening before, the mate had kicked out of his path like a mongrel dog. He still carried a hand to his hurt back from time to time; he was still fair-bearded, plump, and foolish-faced,

a target to invite kicks and scorn; but now he was laughing at the mate's baffled face, gaping with grins of security and defiance. They felt themselves so safe that they did not even relax their studied attitude of insolent ease in the face of those who commanded them.

The old captain bustled to the front, elbowing Mr. Fant out of his way. His infirmity was making his face twitch in rapid shivers, so that he seemed to be winking and leering at the men. He had been famous in his day for his powers as a man-driver and heavy-handed tyrant; already he was futile and pitiable. There was a sputter of laughter among the lounging men as he appeared.

"Hey!" he cried. "What's this—what's this? Off wi' them hatches, now! Off wi' them! This ain't no time for foolin'!"

Not a man moved. "Dem hatches stops vere dey is," said somebody, solemnly.

"Eh?"

The lean old man recoiled as if he had been struck. Perhaps never since the day he first trod deck-planks, as a boy with the seeds of brutality yet dormant in him, had he seen authority defied to its face. "Eh?" he questioned, feebly.

There was a chorus of answer. A dozen voices tangled themselves in joyous retort:—

"Let der old hooker burn. . . . der mate burn bid her . . . . finish der bulldosin' game . . . . von't never have men no more, dey von't . . . . take dey boats an' leave dem!"

In Goodwin's ear there sounded the hoarse whisper of Noble. "Watch Duggan!" it said.

The second mate stood a little behind and to one side of the captain; what was noticeable about him was that he stood with one hand behind his back. As Goodwin looked he leaned forward to whisper to the captain. But Goodwin and Noble were not the only men who observed him. As the captain, half-turning towards him, nodded, there rose the deep guttural voice of the big man, Brechter.

"*Ja!*" he said. "Und if der second mate tries to pull hees gun I vill shoot."

He was at the foot of the starboard ladder, erect, hairy, immense, at once portentous and ungainly. His huge face, yellow and rotund, like an uncut cheese, commanded the three officers, and in his hand was the mate's big revolver.

"Dere von't be no gun-play," he said. "Dis hooker is goin' to burn—*ja!*"

The chorus of his fellows confirmed him: "She is goin' to burn . . . . dis hooker . . . *ja!*"

The captain and his officers were consulting against the rail. From the ventilator cowls at the break of the fo'c'sle-head there were rising sinuous spires of smoke that thinned to invisibility on the air and carried the bitter smell of fire along the decks. Looking aft, Goodwin could see the figure of the man at the wheel. He was a Dutchman, and therefore in the plot; yet, claimed and compelled by the mere habit of sea-duty, he stood faithfully to the wheel, against the culminating moment when he should desert it to take his place in the boat, steering the *Etna* "full and by." There was another figure on the poop, too—the captain's grey and terrible wife. Doubtless she knew by then what delayed her breakfast. She stood at the rail looking forward, a squat, elderly figure of a woman.

As if he too had looked aft at that moment, the captain began to speak again.

"Now, men," he began, "you got to turn to. If you got complaints to make, this ain't the time. I'm willin' to hear you an' to put anything right that ain't right. But that'll be for afterwards. We got to get this fire under, an' then——"

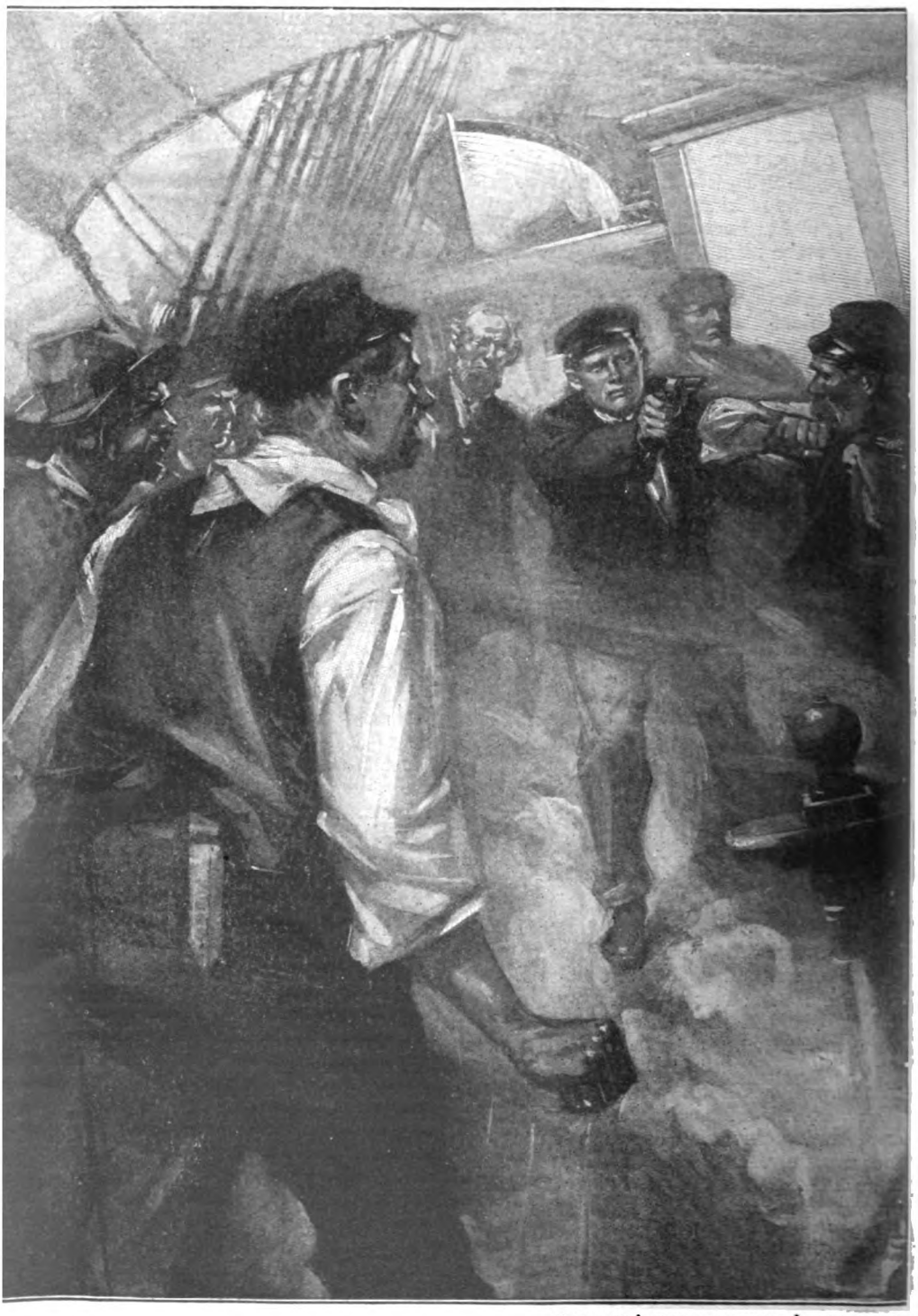
He faltered. His face was twitching like a clown's; the mere dumb hostility of the men, their unresponsiveness to all he said, broke the thread of his purpose. "Men"—his voice cracked shrily as he tried to resume—"we—we got a woman on board," he cried, desperately.

And that awful jangle of voices—the crowd-voice, the speech of humanity when its human quality is absent—answered him.

"*Voman!*"—the scorn and hate of it were patent—"let her burn mit de odders. . . . make her take notice at last . . . . *ja!*"

Even Noble, at Goodwin's ear, was with them. "A woman—if she *was* a woman, I'd—but she ain't a woman—she's a devil!"

All the time, as if superior to the hates and rivalries of mankind, the *Etna* held her course. Goodwin, whose instinct was always for the master-key of any situation, found his eyes and his thoughts shifting from the crowd about the hatch to the ship herself, the towering three-staysail-yarder which sailors called "the hell-packet." Aft her empty decks were white and spacious; her ample breadth of beam showed large; her bulwarks and rails testified to the solidity of her scantling. Over them the great masts lifted superbly, with their upward reach of spars clear to the long poles over each lofty staysail; she was a ship built and rigged as though to fulfil some wise sailor's ideal of what a ship should be for use and beauty



"OFF WI' THEM HATCHES! MAN THE

HEAD PUMP! LIVELY NOW, YOU DOGS!"

blended. She was a great and graceful tool for the handling of men skilled in her ways, an appliance whose complexity of texture gave her character and personality; it needed men to make her vile! Suddenly in his eyes she was pathetic, infinitely pitiful and helpless, like a beautiful woman with a cancer threatening her life and her beauty. Every born sailor has an artist in the marrow of him, for the beauty of ships compels him like the love of women. Goodwin turned to Noble.

"Jim," he said, "look at her!"

"Eh?"

"Look at her," repeated Goodwin. "The ship, man—take a look at her!"

The old keen face, that for more than forty years had looked on ships and known them, obeyed him. Goodwin watched the old man curiously and anxiously, marking how first he gazed aft along the roving, crowded decks, and how then, sailor-like, his eyes were carried aloft and dwelt there, taking in her stature and the fine spread of her spars, lighting in unconscious pleasure at her gallant beauty. Both of them knew each lead and fall as a man knows the sure floors of his home; the intricacy of her rigging had no puzzle for them.

"It ain't good enough, eh?" said Goodwin, when at last Noble looked at him again. They were both sailors—neither Dutchmen, nor mates, but sailors, shipmates, citizens of the sea; it was not needful to speak more explicitly.

Noble sighed and hesitated. "That Fant," he said and paused. "Burnin' alive's too good for him. But—oh, well!"

"Right!" Goodwin needed no clearer reply; they understood one another. Inhumanity and wrong dwell wherever men are cruel and powerful; but a fine ship is a rare thing, and sailors are there to bring them safe between port and port.

"Stand by," said Goodwin. "I'm going to get the gun from that big Dutchman."

Brechter had the revolver in his hand; evidently he liked the sense it gave him of mastery, of holding the officers in check. Without that, it would scarcely have been possible to carry on the mutiny; the men would have been driven to the hatches at the muzzle of a pistol. He stood, toying with the thing, smiling down fatuously at it. He was altogether unprepared for the arms that came about him from behind, in a lightning embrace, for the knee that coerced the small of his back and the hand that twisted the big revolver from his grasp.

"That's enough o' guns," said the cold voice of Goodwin at his ear. "We'll get at this fire now."

He let go Brechter. Mr. Fant on the other side of the deck started. Goodwin pushed Brechter strongly from him and made as though to toss the weapon across the hatch to Mr. Fant. The mate joined his hands to catch it, and Goodwin laughed. With a strong throw he sent the revolver, twirling and glinting in the morning sunlight, over the rail into the sea. There was a cry from the others and a stir.

Mr. Duggan's hand dived behind him and came forth again, bristling with the menace of a revolver.

"Off wi' them hatches! Man the head pump! Lively now, you dogs!"

It took two days and nights for all hands to get the fire under, toiling like beasts in the burning hold, while the *Etna*, serene and lofty, like some archangel of the seas, went her graceful way. When it was over, Goodwin went to the wheel, while along the decks the crew, black as negroes with the intolerable toil, slept heavily, each man where he had dropped. On the weather side of the poop, black likewise, with charred and muddy rags replacing the customary neatness of his garments, Mr. Fant walked his beat, watchful and wakeful. A turn aft brought him to the binnacle; he looked in at the compass-face.

"Mind your steering," he said, in his crisp, quiet voice.

"Aye, aye, sir," responded Goodwin, decorously.

ORIGINALITY IN MURDER.

By GEORGE R. SIMS.

Illustrated by Frank Gillett, R.I.

GEORGE JOSEPH SMITH, the man whose principal occupation was bigamy for the purpose of obtaining the property of his unfortunate brides, was responsible for a series of murders in which he displayed considerable originality. That is to say, there was originality in his first murder. The second and the third murders, being exact repetitions of the first murder, were not originals, they were copies.

Had he contented himself with his original murder, the drowning of Miss Mundy in her bath at Herne Bay, he would have been a successful as well as an original murderer; but at Blackpool and Highgate he brought about the death of a bride in a bath with such slavish imitation of his first proceeding that he wrought his own undoing and brought himself to the gallows.

The first murder was perhaps the "safest" murder that has ever been brought home to its perpetrator. It is quite possible that even when he was charged with it the jury might not have convicted him had they not been permitted by the judge to hear evidence as to a second and a third "accident" to a bride in a bath, the first occurring, according to the bereaved husband, while he was out buying fish for his bride, the second while he was out buying eggs for his bride, and the third while he was out buying tomatoes for his bride.

A young woman who had been taken by her husband to see a doctor because she had been "having fits" takes a bath. She is found dead in the bath. She has had a fit in the bath and been drowned. It is quite easy for anyone to be drowned in a bath. Accidental death in a bath is not a rare occurrence, and very little water is wanted to make the accidental submersion a fatal one. The highest authorities are agreed on that.

Dr. Taylor, in his "Manual of Medical Jurisprudence," quotes cases of drowning in shallow water and incidentally of drowning in a bath, and he explains that such a position is by no means incompatible with accidental drowning.

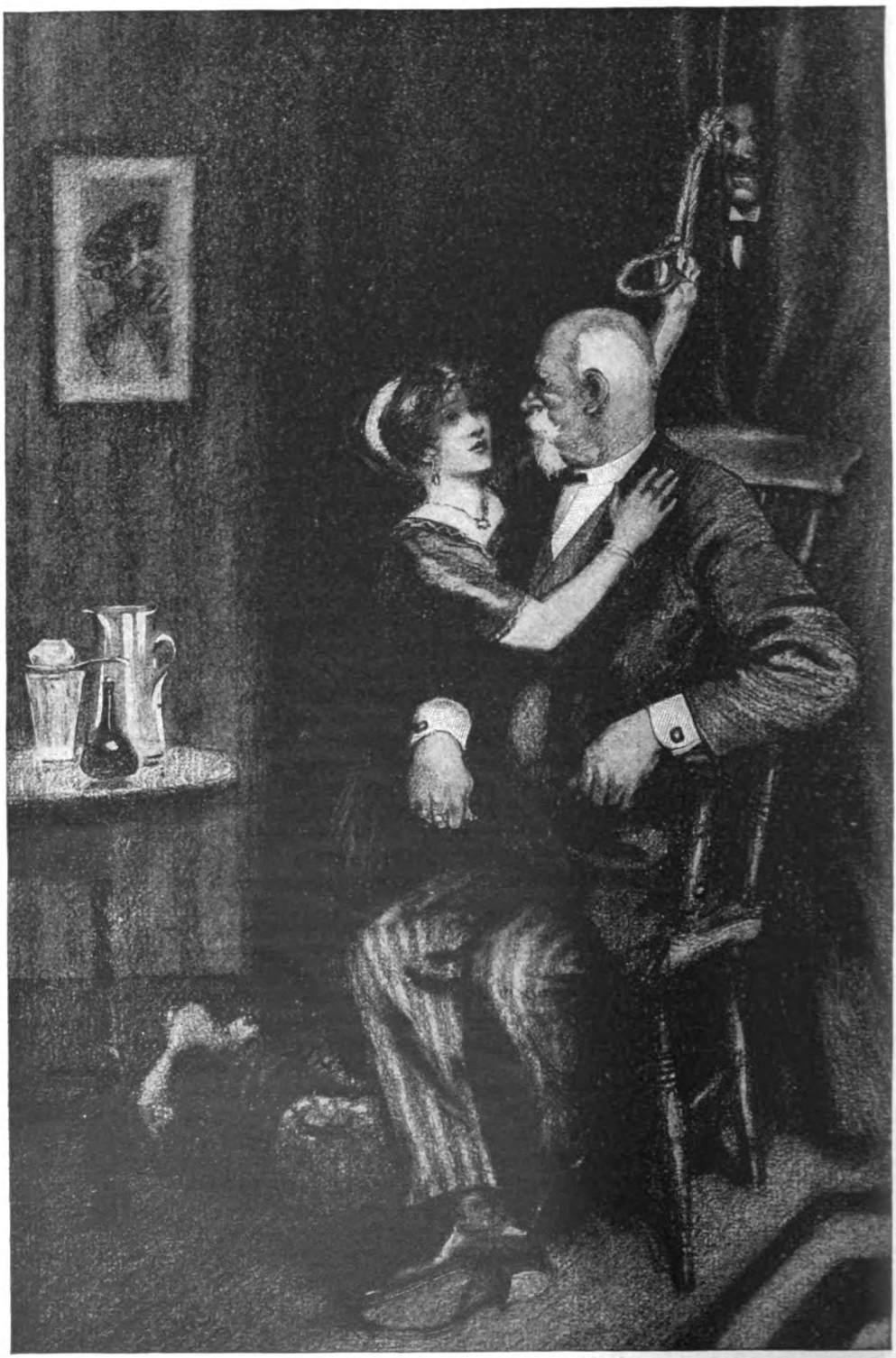
A person suddenly attacked by syncope, epilepsy, or apoplexy may fall with his face in a gutter, a ditch, or a small quantity of water and might die in that position, not having power to extricate himself. Immersion of the mouth in water not more than a few inches deep will produce all the phenomena of death by drowning. A man or woman may thus die in three minutes.

In cases of drowning where homicide is suspected some marks of violence may be expected, but Smith accomplished his first murder so cleverly that no marks were found on the body, and yet he must have forced the head of a powerful, well-built woman under water and held it there, and have used sufficient force to prevent her struggling, as for some brief space of time at least his victim would have had the use of her arms and legs.

The theory that George Smith rendered his victims senseless or helpless before putting them into the bath was disposed of by the Blackpool evidence. Alice Burnham was seen walking towards the bathroom in which she was to meet her fate.

There were no bruises on the bodies except in one case, and then they were of a trifling character and would not in themselves have been sufficient to justify even a suspicion that the woman had been murdered.

By the remarkable way in which he accomplished his first safe murder and the skill



"GABRIELLE, WITH ONE ARM ROUND THE OLD MAN'S NECK, RAISED THE OTHER HAND ABOVE HER HEAD AND GRASPED THE NOOSE."

with which he committed his second and third murders, botn of which took place in a house filled with people who never heard the sound of a struggle or a cry, the Bluebeard of the Bath is certainly entitled to any credit there may be in originality in murder.

The writer who sets out to deal with originality in crime will not be embarrassed by the number of instances, especially if he elects to deal with originality in murder. The reason is not far to seek and is no reflection upon the ingenuity of the criminally inclined, because there is a strong probability that the murders which have been accomplished in the most original manner have never been found out; that is to say, they have not been recognized as murders.

As the three murders committed on an original plan by Smith were declared by the verdict of a coroner's jury to be cases of accidental death, so have dozens of other deaths by deliberate murder been officially ascribed as due to accidental or natural causes.

How many carefully-planned and cunningly-executed murders are included in the list of mysterious disappearances which are published annually by the police authorities we cannot even surmise. "Murder as a Fine Art" has still its professors.

There is no striking originality in administering poison to a person who stands in your way or by whose death you would profit, and a considerable number of people are probably put out of the world in this way every year without the slightest suspicion of foul play being aroused. But the printed record of crime teems with instances of persons who poisoned so cleverly that they have only been brought to justice through an act of carelessness due to the sense of security acquired by the immunity they have for years enjoyed while indulging in their favourite occupation.

Probably the men and women who have shown the greatest originality in the use of poison have gone to their graves highly respected members of the community.

Sir Henry Thompson, as long ago as 1898, pointed out that the poisons employed in the future would probably be such as leave the least, if any, trace behind. He was of opinion that "easily decomposed compounds are likely to be used, the existence of which it is difficult, if not impossible, to verify after two or three days."

Sir J. Crichton Browne, in a public lecture, stated explicitly that there were organic poisons well known to experts which could be used with impunity, and without the least fear of detection.

If we pass from surmise to fact we shall find that there is far more originality in the manner of the accomplishment of a murder than in the method of bringing the death about, and that the foreigner, as a rule, displays far more ingenuity and fertility of resource than the matter-of-fact and unromantic Englishman, who in his murders, as in other big undertakings, is given to "muddling through."

One of the most ingenious methods of committing a murder in a room without leaving any trace of the crime on the scene of its execution was that practised by Eyraud and Gabrielle Bompard in the murder in Paris of the process-server Gouffé.

I was in Paris at the time, and when the French magistrates had proceeded to the reconstruction of the crime in the apartment in the Rue Tronson Ducoudray I was permitted to enter it and see exactly how the murder had been accomplished.

For a time it had been a mystery, and the Paris Press was full of theories as to how it had been accomplished, but the truth was eventually revealed.

Eyraud, a shady character who at one time had been possessed of considerable wealth, desired to dispose of Gouffé, and he selected Gabrielle Bompard, a good-looking, flighty young woman, as his accomplice.

The apartment in which the crime was to be committed was the one occupied by Gabrielle on the ground floor of a house in the Rue Tronson Ducoudray. Gabrielle made an appointment with Gouffé to visit her.

Previous to the time fixed for the elderly lover's arrival something else was fixed. Eyraud bought a rope and two pulleys, which he fastened up in the room, hiding them behind a curtain. Underneath, quite close to the curtain, he placed an arm-chair, the other chairs being removed. Into this chair Gouffé was led by the woman, while over the chair was hanging the rope with a running noose at the end of it.

When Gouffé sat down Eyraud was behind the curtain. At a prearranged moment Gabrielle, with one arm round the old man's neck, raised the other hand above her head, grasped the noose, and pulling it quickly down placed it over Gouffé's neck. Instantly Eyraud hoisted the victim into the air and the process-server was quickly strangled.

A foreign miscreant named Hoyos displayed undoubted originality in two murders. And he did not, like Smith, repeat himself.

He wanted to get rid of his wife without arousing suspicion. Mme. Hoyos, who was separated from her husband, was living in the

country, and near her house was a meadow in which a number of horses were turned loose.

Hoyos ascertained that his wife was in the habit of going to the nearest market town regularly on a certain day and walking back from the railway station to her home by a road which at the time Mme. Hoyos returned was, as a rule, a deserted one.

One day, soon after dawn, some labourers going to work discovered the body of Mme. Hoyos lying in the roadway near the meadow in which the horses were. The gate was open and one or two of the horses had strayed away.

When the medical men who saw the body discovered that the face and breast of the woman were covered with bruises and wounds which had evidently been inflicted by the shoe of a horse, it was at once assumed that she had been attacked by the horses which had got out of the meadow and that one of them had kicked her to death. And that was the decision at which Justice arrived.

It was only after the arrest of Hoyos in connection with a sensational murder a year or two afterwards that Justice ascertained that the horses were quite innocent and that the guilty party was Hoyos himself.

He had attached a horse-shoe to his boot, met his wife, knocked her senseless, and kicked her to death with the heavy boot to which the horse-shoe was attached.

The murder for which this ingenious criminal was ultimately arrested also showed a large amount of originality. He was in want of money, so he insured his life for four thousand pounds with the Phœnix Office, and the policy was made over to Alphonsine Figue, a woman who lived with him as his wife.

Hoyos had previously made the acquaintance of a man named Baron. Baron was about the height and build of Hoyos, and was hard up and very grateful to have found a friend who not only paid the rent of his room in Paris but gave him his old clothes and old linen to wear.

Early on the morning of November 3rd, 1888, some workmen in the service of the Great Northern Railway of France found the body of a man lying on the line at Chantilly, on the route to Senlis. Several trains had passed over the body, and it was mangled to such an extent that it was impossible to recognize the features.

When the pockets were searched papers were discovered which indicated that the man who had been killed was named Henri Hoyos. But there were marks on the railway bank which showed signs of a struggle, and the surgeons who examined the body declared that the hacking about of the features was not due to a railway train but to a chopper or a hatchet.

News of the finding of a body was circulated, and at once Alphonsine Figue came forward and in a state of great distress identified it.

Her "husband" had set out two days previously with a large sum of money about him to transact some business, and had undoubtedly been waylaid and murdered on the railway.

The manager of the Phœnix, when he heard that the four thousand pounds had become payable after the payment of only one premium, was a little suspicious. He made inquiries, went to the police, and demanded that there should be further investigation into the identity of the corpse.

Hardly had the inquiry commenced before it was ascertained that Hoyos had been seen alive and in the company of Alphonsine Figue the night after the body had been discovered on the railway.

It was also discovered that a man named Baron, who had been constantly in the company of Hoyos, had disappeared. The corpse was exhumed and a number of people who had known Baron promptly recognized it as his.

Then it was ascertained that there was a man named Baron in a situation at Valenciennes. The police went to clear up the mystery, and discovered that Baron was Hoyos, and he was promptly arrested. Mr. Henri Hoyos had kept his head through many criminal adventures but he lost it over the last one.

There was originality in the murder committed by the late Christiana Edmunds. The idea was conceived in a brain that was undoubtedly affected, but it had a great deal more method in it than one generally finds in madness.

Christiana Edmunds was a young lady who had fallen in love with her medical attendant. The doctor, who was a married man, naturally gave the young lady no encouragement.

Then the young lady said to herself, "He will never love me because he has a wife. It is the wife who stands in the way of my romance. How can I get rid of her without exciting suspicion? He would never love me if he thought I had killed his wife."

The unhappy young woman then hit upon an idea. She purchased a box of chocolates, into some of which she put poison. Then she went to call on the doctor's wife—the families were on friendly terms—and offered

"INTO THE CHOCOLATES SHE HAD INTRODUCED A QUANTITY OF STRYCHNINE."

her some chocolates. The doctor's wife took one, did not like the taste of it, and ejected it.

The doctor, on finding what had happened, had his suspicions and refused to visit Miss Edmunds again as her medical attendant.

Then Miss Edmunds determined to prove to the doctor that his suspicions were unjust, and it was in a highly original way that she set about her task.

She went to the shop—a well-known one in Brighton—at which she had purchased her sweets, and bought some more chocolates. Into these she inserted poison, and then she went down on the beach and made the acquaintance of some boys, to whom she gave the chocolates with instructions to take them back and say a mistake had been made by the lady, and they were to bring back a

larger box. For this she gave the children the money.

The boxes of chocolates she sent back had always been tampered with by her. Into the chocolates she had introduced a quantity of strychnine. Her idea was that among the people who purchased chocolates at this shop some would be served with the poisoned boxes, and then the doctor would say to himself, "Oh, Miss Edmunds had no designs upon my wife's life when she brought those chocolates here. Other people have been made ill by chocolates purchased at that shop. It is the fault of the chocolates, not of Miss Edmunds."

Unfortunately, a little boy who was staying at Brighton purchased a box which contained strychnine and died. The police took the matter up. The whole of the stock in the shop was analyzed, and the startling discovery was made that several of the boxes contained poisoned chocolates.

Christiana Edmunds was arrested, tried at the old Bailey, found guilty and sentenced to death, but was proved to be insane and sent to Broadmoor.

A few years before her death in that establishment I was present at a female patients' ball, and I sat out a couple of dances with Christiana Edmunds. Any doubt I may have entertained as to her condition of mind was dispelled after the first few minutes' conversation. She had the harsh voice of insanity, and she was extraordinarily vain and arrogant to a degree. She told me that it was a disgraceful thing for a lady of her position to have to associate with such *canaille* as all the other patients were. Miss Edmunds, who was very elegantly dressed for this ball, wore a spray of beautiful winter blooms and some rather fine jewellery.

The originality in the crime of Christiana Edmunds was that she attempted to commit half-a-dozen murders in order to prove that she was innocent of having attempted to commit one.

There was originality in the crime of Baron Wilhelm Carl Ludwig von Scheurer, who had acted as a special correspondent for an American journal during the Russo-Turkish War.

After the war the Baron, who was a young, elegant, and good-looking man, stayed for a time in Bucharest. He had married in America a charming young lady and left her there.

In Bucharest he fell in love with a pretty servant girl named Juliana Metz. He brought her to London with him and placed her at a first-class London school in order that she might complete a somewhat defective education.

Then he took her down to Bristol, and there at the registry office he married Juliana in the name of Baron Charles Percy Robert, the object of the *alias* being to prevent his real name getting upon the record.

Then he went to Paris, where Juliana, who had resumed her maiden name, was taken ill.

A certain Dr. Castelnau was called in to attend to her. Dr. Castelnau was an old gentleman with a past. He was a well-known revolutionary, he had been connected with the Commune, and he was the editor of the Anarchist organ, *Ni Dieu ni Maître*.

The Baron and the doctor who had been brought together by the wife's illness became very friendly, and presently the Baron effected an insurance on his own life with an American company which had a branch in Paris and also with a London company for the sum of eight thousand pounds. The first premium on each insurance was duly paid in September, 1885.

Two months later, on the 20th of November, the companies were informed that the Baron von Scheurer had passed away. He had died at a little house in Meudon, where he had gone to place himself under the care of Dr. Castelnau, a medical man who thought he had discovered a cure for consumption, and had taken this house at Meudon as a sort of nursing home.

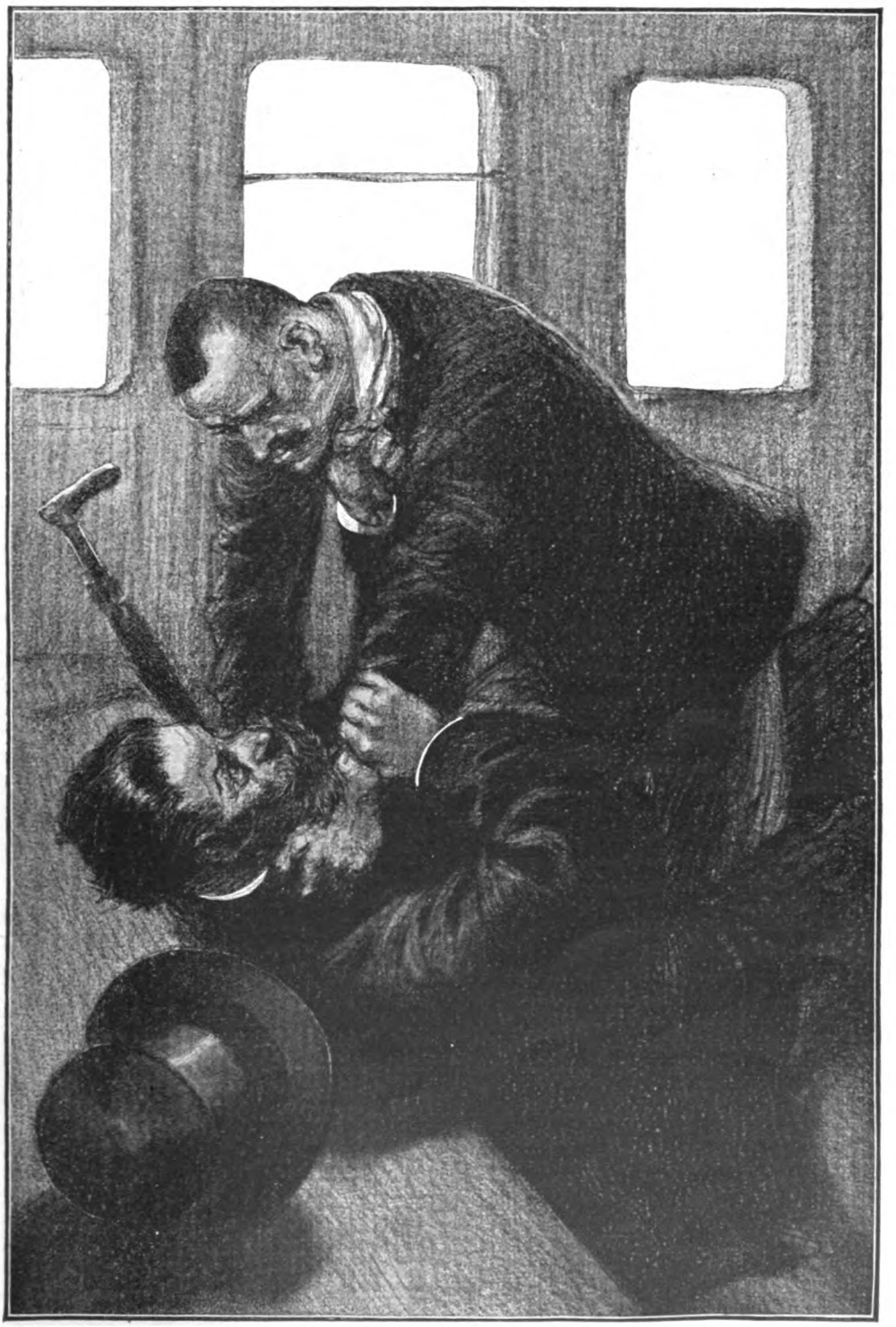
When the news of the Baron's death was received at the insurance offices the agents of both companies at once set out for Meudon.

The body, in accordance with Continental custom, had already been buried, but a medical man of undoubted respectability in Meudon informed the agents that he himself, with Dr. Castelnau, had attended the Baron in his last moments and had been present at the death.

The undertaker who had managed the funeral also gave information, which left no doubt in the agents' minds that the Baron really had succeeded in dying after paying only a single premium on his insurance policy.

The agents returned and reported to their companies, but were instructed to make further inquiries. When they went back to Meudon they were shown the newly-made grave of the Baron, and above it a handsome memorial on which these words were inscribed :—

Here Lies
WILHELM CARL LUDWIG VON SCHEURER,
Who died on the 20th of November, 1885,
Aged 37.
Deeply mourned by his family.



"WHILE THE TRAIN WAS TRAVELLING JUD SPRANG ON THE DOCTOR AND ATTEMPTED TO MURDER HIM."

Eventually the eight thousand pounds were paid over to the disconsolate widow, *née* Juliana Metz.

The widow handed a portion of the amount to a chemist who was a friend of Dr. Castelnau, and the chemist handed it to the doctor. A servant at Meudon received a handsome gratuity, and with the rest of the money the bereaved Juliana set out on a journey.

Journeys end in lovers' meetings, and this ended in the meeting of the lovers who had become man and wife at the registry office at Bristol. Juliana handed over the bulk of the insurance money to her husband, Baron von Scheurer, who then set out for Canada, and she returned to Bucharest.

But the little servant girl at Meudon, Mariette Prouteau, although she had been well paid for her silence, could not help gossiping with her female friends. One evening she confided to a companion the story of the comedy of the death and burial of Baron von Scheurer. "It wasn't the Baron at all who died," she said; "it was a poor fellow the doctor had brought there to try his experiments on. The poor chap was in the last stage of consumption, and he died soon afterwards. But we called him the Baron when he was dead, and buried him as the Baron, because there was a lot of money to be paid by the insurance companies when the Baron died."

Mariette's confidante at once communicated the details of the story to a magistrate, with the result that Dr. Castelnau, the chemist, and Mariette were arrested for being concerned in a conspiracy to defraud the English and American insurance companies by substituting a corpse.

Juliana was taken into custody in Styria and transferred to Vienna, where it was arranged that she should be tried. But every effort of the French police to discover the whereabouts of the Baron failed.

Just when they had abandoned all hope of securing him, they discovered the dead body that was really his in a room in the Hotel Volta on the Lake of Como. He had committed suicide, leaving a letter behind him in which he declared that the fair Juliana had only obeyed his orders, and begged that she might be considered innocent.

The originality displayed in his crime by a Prussian spy may be regarded as an up-to-date item for discussion.

Some time before the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War a man named Jud was a private soldier in the Equipages Militaires.

Jud, who was undoubtedly a Prussian spy, was able to make many valuable communications to the War Office in Berlin.

He deserted, and all trace of him was lost till someone who knew him intimately recognized him at a railway station. They saw him enter a compartment in which was seated a Russian army doctor. This army doctor had come to Paris on a special mission from the Czar to the Emperor Napoleon the Third.

While the train was travelling Jud suddenly sprang on the doctor and attempted to murder him, but failed. Jud made his escape, but was captured. The doctor, although seriously hurt, was able to give a description of his assailant, and Jud was eventually arrested and locked up, but in some mysterious way he managed to escape and so disappeared for a second time.

The idea in French official circles was that an order for the murder of the Russian doctor had been issued from Berlin, and some very important people took part in the investigation which followed.

One of them, M. Poinsot, a famous judge and the President of the Imperial Court, succeeded in obtaining a number of documents which left no doubt of the fact that Jud had been engaged in the interests of the Prussian Secret Service.

One day the judge, with these documents in his possession, set out by train to see a functionary in another part of the country whom he wished to consult concerning them.

In some extraordinary way Jud must have obtained exact information as to what was happening. At any rate, during that journey M. Poinsot was murdered and the documents disappeared.

That Jud was the author of this second crime was proved beyond all possible doubt. Again someone had seen him entering the train, but more than that, he had left in the railway carriage some portions of his wearing apparel, and among them was a peculiar scarf which he had been wearing when first arrested, and which was shown in the photograph taken of him at the time.

This second political crime by a Prussian spy who for a long time had been a French soldier put the French detective force on their mettle, and M. Claude, the chief of the detective police at the time, himself undertook to track the criminal down.

He tracked him across the frontier into Prussian territory. Directly he arrived there he was waited upon by the local Commissioner of Police, who informed him politely but firmly that he was wasting his time, as in no circumstances would a French official be

permitted to arrest M. Jud on Prussian soil. And there the matter ended and nothing was heard of Jud for many years, although no doubt he continued to be actively employed in the Prussian Secret Service.

Many years afterwards, in 1885, another mysterious railway murder occurred in France. M. Barrême, ex-Prefect of the Department of the Eure, was murdered in mysterious circumstances while on a railway journey. Writing on the subject as late as the year 1890, M. Macé, one of the most brilliant criminal investigators of modern times, suggests that Jud had again committed a political crime in the interests of his employers.

There is no originality in committing a murder on the railway, but I cannot recall any other case in which a man suspected of having attempted to commit a murder on the railway discovers the person who is in possession of the proofs of his guilt and promptly commits another railway murder in order to get possession of the documents.

About a hundred years ago a young woman was found assassinated in a room in Paris in circumstances which have made the case the most mysterious murder on record. It was this case that inspired Edgar Allan Poe to write "The Murder in the Rue Morgue," and in our own time Gaston Leroux tried to solve the mystery it presented in "The Mystery of the Yellow Room."

Rose Delacourt was a young frail woman —frail both in the physical and the moral sense. She occupied a room at the top of a house let out in apartments in what is now the Rue Montmartre. Her room was at the top of the house, and it was about sixty feet from her window to the street below.

Late one night—or, rather, in the small hours of the morning—Rose, who did not usually spend her evenings at home, rang the front-door bell and was admitted by the wife of the concierge, who exchanged a few words with her. She was alone. She went upstairs to her room.

It was the custom of the concierge's wife to take the young woman a cup of chocolate every morning at ten o'clock, and so at ten o'clock the next morning the woman went upstairs as usual. She knocked at Rose Delacourt's door and received no answer. She tried the door and found it fastened. Concluding that the girl was tired and still asleep, she went downstairs.

When later in the day she went again and found the door still locked and could obtain no answer, she became alarmed and called in the police.

When the door had been forced open and the police entered the room they found Rose Delacourt lying in bed quite peacefully on her back, but apparently dead. When the clothes were turned down it was discovered that the girl had been murdered. A dagger which had been plunged into her heart still remained there, and the blow had been struck with such force that the point of the dagger had passed through the body and cut into the mattress. There were no signs of a struggle, and the girl's money and jewellery were untouched.

The mystery of the crime is not its motive or its method, but in the manner in which it was accomplished.

The door was not only locked on the inside, the key still being in the lock, but it was bolted on the inside when the police forced it open. There was only one window to the apartment, and that was found securely fastened on the inside.

It is quite possible to account for the murderer having obtained admission without being seen by the concierge's wife. He might have been a lodger in another part of the house, or he might have been a stranger who had entered the house earlier and had waited concealed on one of the landings till Rose passed up and then followed her into her room.

But how, after committing the murder, did he make his escape and leave the door locked and bolted on the inside and the window securely fastened on the inside?

There was a theory at the time that a man might have got out by climbing the chimney and reaching the roof, made his way to another house, and in some way reached safety from there. But the chimney was examined, and it was found that it was quite impossible for a man, even of slim build, to have passed through it to the roof.

The mystery was so complete that it has remained a mystery for over a hundred years, though during that period the case has been the frequent study of criminologists. The murderer of Rose Delacourt certainly displayed originality in crime. He committed a murder and quitted the scene of his crime unseen, and in such a way that from that day to this no one has been able to say "how he did it."

There are many other crimes in which remarkable originality has been displayed, and with some of these I will deal on another occasion.

AMBITIONS.

By MAY EDGINTON.

Illustrated by Lewis Baumer.

THE last customer to leave the Restaurant à Guillaume had not left. He was staying a long, lo g while for eighteen pence. William could wait no longer. Fetching a soup-plate from the adjacent kitchen, he heaped it high with the cuts from three joints and two veg., and sat down.

Like an elegant statue Guillaume the proprietor posed at the back of the room, but William the head-waiter did not mind that.

Charlie, the under-waiter and general boy, passed through on his way home, with his aged overcoat shrouding his black-and-white, his little cap held meekly against his chest, and bade William a reverential good night, but William did not notice that.

What William thought in his able mind was, "This here place is going down."

That being so, William proceeded with admirable earnestness of purpose to secure his plenteous meal.

Guillaume, the proprietor, waked to life at the back of the room, and, reluctantly abandoning his pretty pose, came down to William and lurked about behind him.

"See," hissed Guillaume, "see! The gentleman have not left."

"Sir," said William, in a soft voice, "he don't take the two-shilling. He's a reg'lar eighteenpenny. A mere clurk——"

"Ah!" breathed Guillaume. "So?"

He undulated back to the end of the room.

The latest customer signalled to William, who hastened to him, and presented the bill of inevitable proportions.

When the client had gone, leaving William the richer by threepence, he returned to the soup plate of mixed victuals, and ate conscientiously to the last morsel. Subsequently, as he cleared the table, he heard a very heavy sigh from somewhere behind the palm. Casting a swift glance, William saw the outline of Guillaume protruding beyond the long stems of the handsome plant that was the pride of the restaurant.

William joined Guillaume behind the palm.

"Yessir?" said William.

"'ZEY WILL TAKE ZE CHAIRS, ZE TABLES, ALL ZE EFFECTS. I AM RUIN.'"

Guillaume was shaken by heavy sighs, and shedding an emotional tear or two. He did not resent his *employé's* inquisitiveness, but rather showed a confidential mood.

"Ah!" said he, "it is well to be you, receiving ze money, ze extra money! But for me, ze poor proprietaire——"

"Sir?" said William.

"I despair!" cried Guillaume. "In a day or two my creditors will be here. Zey will take ze chairs, ze tables, all ze effects. I am

ruin. I have gif everyone too much for ze money, and am ruin! It is well to be you, taking ze tip hundred times a day. Ah! you haf a splendid position, you!"

Guillaume covered his face with his hands.

"Zere is nozzing," he mourned, "nozzing left for ze poor proprietaire. I 'ave too good a 'eart. Ze *Restaurant à Guillaume* is a ruin!"

"Do I understand you to say, sir," said William, in a soft voice, with light not of land or sea on his Napoleonic face, "that the place is not paying? Is, in short, sir, worth practically nothing?"

"You do, greedy one; you do!" cried Guillaume, passionately. "It is you who are well paid! For me zere is nozzing."

William went home, to hatch in his brain a plot for his financial future.

Arriving early at the restaurant the following morning, so early that even Charlie had not yet come in to sweep the floor, William found Guillaume already watering the palm, and looking about him with eyes of sentimental adoration.

"I should like to speak to you, sir," said William, in a crisper voice than he had ever used before to the proprietor.

Guillaume led the way to his tiny office-room behind the kitchen.

William took from his pocket a crackling wad of notes, divided the wad with the rapidity of a conjurer, and dropped half into his pocket.

"Sir," he said, "I am a poor man, as is only suitable to my position, but I have saved, and I offer you fifty pounds for all your interest in the restaurant."

"*Mais*—— Fifty pounds!" exclaimed Guillaume, starting back with an outraged expression.

Very slowly and affectionately William laid down note after note upon the little table, until it wore one of the most desirable coverings in the world.

"See!" said William, laying them out, reverently. "See that!" William added to it. "There's another! See it! Look! Fifty pounds! I've known men refuse money when they've only *heard* about it, but never when they've visualized it. It is a great thing to visualize fifty pounds."

"*Mais!*" screamed Guillaume. "For all my proprietary interest in this superb restaurant, with its valuable and expanding *clientèle!* Nevaire! I say nevaire!"

"Visualize it," urged William, coaxing Guillaume's eyes to the table.

"What is the ozzers in your pocket?" said Guillaume, gazing at four square inches of William's coat.

William drew out another note.

"You visualize fifty-five pounds," said he.

"There is ozzers!" cried Guillaume, as one inspired.

William added another note to the table covering.

"More!" cried Guillaume.

William produced another.

"More," cried Guillaume, "for zis superb restaurant with its valuable and expanding *clientèle!* Nevaire has zere been such an investment!"

Stimulated by Guillaume, William parted one by one with the objects of his love until a hundred pounds lay, clear in the sight, upon the table.

Guillaume stretched out his hands, but found himself drawn gently back, and William gathered up the money with admirable celerity.

"You have visualized it," said he, "let that do. A hundred pounds will I pay you for proprietary rights in this here business, on condition that you invest it in same; in which case the money may as well remain where it is, without the empty form of changing hands."

William transferred it again to his pocket.

"I am not a mean man," he added. "I shall pay you six per cent., and a better rate of interest you cannot get with safety anywhere."

Before Guillaume could begin to give utterance to his mixed thoughts, a stranger entered the restaurant, and Charlie, who had arrived to sweep the floor, ran to the office-room.

"A customer zo early!" cried Guillaume. "Or a creditor!" he added, and sank, limply, into a chair.

"A creditor it might well be," said William, preying mercilessly upon Guillaume's despair, "but, lucky for you, it's not. The gentleman is my solicitor what was instructed to call about the drawing up of this deed of sale. Lucky indeed for you as he arrived before the creditor! What it is to be in debt!"

"Bring the gentleman in," cried Guillaume, in a panic.

In a remarkably short space of time Guillaume had signed his name to a document.

"I should prefer to 'ave the moneys," he said, ingratiatingly.

The lawyer put his finger on the document, and showed Guillaume where he had agreed

to invest one hundred pounds in the restaurant.

A pregnant silence fell, which was broken by William saying, rather reproachfully :—

"And I gave you the hundred pounds to invest."

William's Napoleonic face shone as the face of a benefactor.

Guillaume wrung his hands.

"I do not understand," he wailed. "Zis is buying and selling wizout ze money changin' 'ands."

"I must go," said William's solicitor, taking up his hat and stick.

"'Ave I lost my restaurant?" faltered Guillaume.

"You do not understand finance," said William, patiently. "You have sold your business at an advantageous price, and invested the money, and I am now the proprietor."

A sudden ray of hope flashed into Guillaume's face.

"You will like to 'ave," he suggested, "a good 'ead waiter, one who knows the clients? So? Be'old!"

Guillaume tapped his chest, and smiled, joyously.

"You do not need to pay mooch," he remarked. "It is of ze tip zat I zink."

"I am not giving up the position," said William, coldly.

Guillaume fell into his chair again, gasping.

"You cannot be both ze proprietaire and ze waiter," he said, piteously.

"I can," replied William, at his most Napoleonic, "and I will."

"*Et moi?*" asked Guillaume, in a faint voice.

"I am very pleased to offer you the post of manager," answered William, generously, "at a salary of thirty shillings a week and your food."

"But ze tip?" Guillaume murmured.

"I should not expect my manager to solicit tips," said William, with his darkest frown. "You must think yourself fortunate in getting a place where you can keep your present appearance. You won't have the trouble of looking for a new dress suit old enough for a waiter."

By now it was after eleven o'clock, and the cook hastened into the kitchen. They could hear him banging saucepans upon the range. Early lunchers usually arrived about twelve.

"Come, come!" said William, with authority, to Guillaume.

They returned to the restaurant.

The young Charlie, attenuated and pale, had already hidden the broom, abandoned his old jacket for his dress coat, and was standing at attention, with a dreamy air.

"Resume your usual 'abits," said William, sharply, to Guillaume.

Guillaume went to pose for his statue at the farther end of the room, and William inspected the cold viands arranged by Charlie upon the wagon.

"Charlie!" murmured William, beckoning.

Charlie joined him, respectfully, and William laid the hand of patronage upon his arm, and struggled for words, but no words would come.

"I shall burst," said William to himself, after a few seconds of this.

Aware as he was, however, of how calamitous such an accident must be in a restaurant imminently expecting early-lunchers, William ultimately conquered these very natural feelings, and began.

"Charles, what is your age?"

"F'ohteen," replied Charlie, deferentially.

"Do you think," inquired William, leading gently but surely up to his disclosure, "as you're getting on in life as you'd ought to be?"

"I don' know, Mr. William," replied Charlie, timidly.

"Do you know what *I* am?" pursued William.

"Er—er—er——" replied Charlie.

"I am the proprietor of this restaurant," said William.

Charlie turned up his little white eyelashes and fixed his eyes upon his master with an innocent and admiring look.

"I bought it this morning," added William, leaning negligently against the wagon. "And I am keeping on the same labour, so you may make yourself comf'able in your mind."

"Thank you, sir," answered Charlie.

"It is ambition that has put me where you see me now," continued William, intent upon autobiography. "Ambition it is that has goaded me onward; not that I hadn't got the character, also, which is necessary if a man is to be successful. You have to understand finance, too, Charles my lad. I understand finance. Now, what ambition do *you* feel, Charles, and how do you think *you* are going to reach the goal?"

Charlie cast up his little white eyelashes at William, who continued :—

"You are now fourteen, and I don't see that you 'ave any ambition in you. You appear to be quite satisfied with your present position."

Charles's little white eyelashes flickered.

"And so you'd ought to be," added William, hastily. "But ambition'd ought to goad you into enterprise, too. I shall expect to find enterprise in you. You'd ought to be never tired of work, an' of pleasing new customers. Else do you suppose as you'll ever be where I am now? No, my lad, not at twenty-four; nor thirty-four; nor forty-four."

William pulled down his waistcoat.

"THE EVENING OF THAT DAY WAS THE FIRST ON WHICH A CERTAIN LADY CAME TO DINE AT THE RESTAURANT À GUILLAUME."

"Fourteen!" said he; "you'd ought to be trying your best. Look at me. I tried my best, and here I am."

"I 'aven't got nobody to 'elp me, sir," said Charlie.

"You've got my example," said William, severely, "and don't your friends give you good advice?"

"Some woman might 'elp me on," replied Charlie, obviously beginning to think. "There's one wot would do anyfing for me. Women——"

"Don't dwell on them, my lad," said William, sternly. "You are much too young. When you are the proprietor of a restaurant things'll be different for you."

The evening of that day was the first on which a certain lady came to dine at the Restaurant à Guillaume. She wore a navy-blue coat and skirt, a delightful complexion, auburn hair, and boots with white cloth uppers. She emanated a charming scent, and a great tinkling of bracelets and chain-bag accompanied her. From the first moment she set eyes on William, it was evident that he made an impression such as is unusual for a waiter to make upon a customer.

He was not averse, however, to causing a sensation in so *chic* a woman.

He advised her about dinner, was confiding over the wine-list, and as his service approached its end, the effect he had created in her mind was such that she said to him:—

"Surely, monsieur, you have not always been a waiter?"

Then William could smile.

"I am not a waiter, madam," he whispered, with his hand on the back of her chair.

"Indeed, monsieur!"

"I am the proprietor."

"Indeed, monsieur!"

"I became proprietor only this morning; but not wishing to make too sudden a change—the older customers, you see, being used to me——"

"Just so! 'Course!" said the lady, putting almost an intimacy into the words, and nodding her auburn coiffure.

"Coffee, madam?" asked William, tenderly.

When she went away she said, in a low voice: "You will keep this table for me to-morrow night at eight, monsieur?"

She tripped away, and William found time for a rapid whisper to Guillaume.

"You noticed the party I was talking to over there?"

"Ze fat one?" inquired Guillaume, tactlessly.

"Well-grown," said William, coldly. "I should put her at twenty-five or so, and well-grown."

"Ver' well," said Guillaume.

"That's the kind of woman I admire," said William. "Modern; very modern. French. She called me *mosseur*."

William ran to his tables, and waited admirably. Sixty customers did he and Charlie serve with the two-shilling, and twenty with the eighteen-penny.

"You see, my lad," said William to Charlie, during the business, "what a good investment a restaurant is. But will you ever have a restaurant? No. Not at twenty-four; nor thirty-four; nor forty-four, if you hand taters like that."

William thought a great deal of the auburn-haired lady, and broke a vegetable dish.

She came the following night, again alone, and he waited upon her, waving Charlie away. At the end of that second dinner it was astonishing to reflect to what a degree of intimacy they had attained.

"You will keep this table for me to-morrow evening, monsieur?" she asked, as she went out.

On the third evening it occurred to William to examine her left hand to see if a wedding-ring lurked among the others. There was none.

It was evident to him that he had gained a profound influence over her, for she actually said to him:—

"I wish that I had met you somewhere else; in society, I mean, you know. I wish that we had been introduced."

She sighed, and added "Coffee, please!" quickly, as if snatching herself back from a hardly controllable impulse.

By the time William had brought the coffee a thought had occurred to him, bold to extremity, but sweet.

"To-morrow is Sunday, madam."

"I wish you would say 'mademoiselle,' monsieur. What abaht it?"

"Do you ever go for a walk in Kensington Gardens on Sunday afternoons, ma'moselle?"

"Always," she murmured.

"So do I," said William, with a passionate look on his Napoleonic face.

Late that night, as, together, they packed

"HE ADVISED HER ABOUT DINNER."

up the *débris* of many feasts, William put a question to Guillaume.

"Frenchwomen, I've heard say, are good at business?"

"*Magnifique!*" replied Guillaume.

"And frugal in 'abits?" pursued William.

"Ver' frugal," said Guillaume; "ah, ver' frugal indeed."

William thought to himself, as he walked back to his bed-sitting-room in the adjacent square, that he might do considerably worse than marry a Frenchwoman, and although there was no doubt that she moved in nice society, a restaurant proprietor was most eligible. He was very careful with his toilet when he rose on Sunday morning, and when, later in the day, he met a lady in navy blue, and white-topped boots, strolling in the green innocence of Kensington Gardens, he had, in his buttonhole, a spray of camellia

and maidenhair fern, which he was prepared to transfer to the lapel of her coat.

This tender business over, they walked and talked.

Seldom, or perhaps never, had William enjoyed the honour of escorting so *chic* a woman.

One of her most charming traits was her ready sympathy, and the interest which she felt in him. On hearing autobiographical details which pictured, minutely but vividly, William's early life, adolescence, and battle with the world; his mad and splendid burst into young manhood with its awakening ambitions; the triumphs of his incomparable mind over base matter that bestrewed his rocky path; his grasp of finance; and his vision and attainment of success, she passed from womanly compassion for his difficulties to a rapturous enthusiasm for their end.

"What a brain! What a will! What a courage!" she kept repeating, when William, staggered by his own oratorical effort, paused to wipe his brow. "And you have triumphed! Monsieur, what a privilege to become your friend!"

William folded his arms across his chest, and smiled.

"I knew from the first that you were no ordinary man," she said.

She worked from him, by her interest, the whole story of the financial ruin of Guillaume, and she betrayed instantly a splendidly businesslike grasp of the situation.

"Where your friend made the mistake," she explained, "was in not marrying. Had he been married, he would have made over the concern to his wife, nominally, you understand, and he would have been safe. Perfectly safe, monsieur."

William was first startled; then converted.

"It means nothing, you understand," said the lady, looking at the trees. "Between two people who love one another it is nothing at all. It is only that the wife is taking care of her husband's property so that no one can take it from him, whatever occurs. It is a very beautiful thought that, to a woman, monsieur."

She sighed, and dug the ferrule of her blue umbrella absently into the path.

"How cleverly you understand everything, *chair ma'moselle*," said William, beginning to toy perilously with personalities. "I have heard that French ladies are businesslike, but you have surprised me."

"Business is the second breath of life to us," she replied. "The first breath is love. Love and business! When the two ally, monsieur, ah! What a mighty force they are!"

She left William in silence for a few moments to digest this thought, and when she glanced round at him again, it was to find that he had turned on her the look which no woman of intelligence can misinterpret.

"Will you love me, *chair ma'moselle?*" asked William.

"Yes," she whispered.

"And keep the books?" asked William.

"Yes," she whispered.

"And launder the tablecloths?" asked William.

"Yes," she whispered.

"Then there is nothing to wait for, is there?" asked William.

"SELDOM, OR PERHAPS NEVER, HAD WILLIAM ENJOYED THE HONOUR OF ESCORTING SO 'CHIC' A WOMAN."

"No," she whispered.

"*Chairy!*" exclaimed William, passionately.

As they sat together, hand in hand, on a green seat in the gloaming—for the afternoon was far advanced—she told him, in low, confidential tones, of a friend at Islington who, accumulating debt, had been obliged to pay all he owed through not making over his property, nominally, to his wife; and of a gentleman acquaintance who had once had quite a good establishment in Maida Vale, until he similarly suffered; and of her sister's husband, who had been forced to emigrate in the same circumstances. Also William drank in the history of an apparently well-to-do poulterer at Putney, who had been meaning every day to make over his assets to his wife—who was always persuading him on her bended knees, to the wise course—but who had put it off, and put it off, until one day the bailiffs came, and as the poulterer could not dispose of any of his goods, by law, after that, they all went bad, and the poulterer and his wife died of typhoid, and the bailiff's man was poisoned and still shaky in health, and the sanitary authorities took several steps, before ever the case came before the Bankruptcy Court.

"And that poor thing," said mademoiselle, alluding to the deceased wife, "coaxing and coaxing. Ah! to see the ruin coming, and not able to avert it! I always say, *chéri*, that, if ever a man chose to act with such criminal foolishness, I would never stoop to beg and pray. No! I would not persuade him. Let him learn his lesson."

"That is all very well," said William, with an air of quiet rebuke, and not unmindful that women like masterful men, "but whether you wish it or not, my first act after the ceremony will be to take you to my solicitor, and insist on making over the good-will of the restaurant and its effects to you. It is a thing that any sane man would do."

"I do not wish it," said mademoiselle, naturally a little averse to the idea of such responsibility.

William pressed her hand.

"In this," said he, firmly, "I must have my way. In all other respects you will find me kind, but do not try, *mon chair dam*, to thwart me in this."

William could say the next morning, when he arrived to find his manager watering the palm, whose change of ownership had not impaired his pure regard for it, "*Mon amy*, I am going to be married this week."

"*Pourquoi?*" cried Guillaume.

"For reasons of business and sentiment combined," replied William, with an abstruse air, as he changed his coat.

"*À qui?*" cried Guillaume.

"A Frenchwoman," said William, "and we shall make things 'um."

"So you tink," said Guillaume, sourly, "so you tink. Wis zese Guinea-fowl, people is apt to count ze chicken before zey 'atch."

William had fallen into a smiling dream beside the wagon.

Three days later, in the brief interval between the last-lunchers and the first-diners, William was married at the nearest registry-office. True to his previous intention, he took his bride subsequently to his solicitor, where the little business of nominally transferring his property was put through. Then, with a knowledge of perfect financial security, and the husband of a woman who, it was clear to any psychologist, could love expansively, William took madame into their own restaurant, henceforth to be the arena of their life labour.

Here, waited upon by Guillaume and Charlie, they ate a sumptuous meal, and toasted each other in champagne, and William likened his bride, in choice language, to the pink rose of La France.

The curtain of the night rang down, then, upon transcendent happiness, and rose again upon a promising to-morrow.

It was before the lunch rush was over that William missed her. A moment, and she had been, ample and auburn, in the office. Again a moment, and she was not. This phenomenal disappearance, the bridegroom decided, must have been managed while he was busy with their oldest and most regular customer in the north-east corner. It was a phenomenon, however, which displeased William gravely, which caused Guillaume to laugh like a hyena behind the palm; it was a phenomenon, the repetition of which must be firmly forbidden.

William had explained to madame, earlier that morning, that in the busy hours her place was within the sound of his voice.

In a stern silence, helped by the falsely consolatory Guillaume, William commenced presently to clear the *débris* of lunch; but, righteous as was his anger, he did not allow it to impede his sense of justice. He allowed the young Charlie his hour off as usual in the afternoon.

The hour taken by Charlie ran into two. Five-thirty approached. The cook could be heard flinging the dinner saucepans upon the range, and the lunch accounts waited,

"CHARLIE, IN A BLUE LOUNGE SUIT, AND SLAPPING A LITTLE CANE AGAINST HIS LEG, STROLLED IN."

unchecked, in the office, before madame, blue-garmented and magpie-booted, tripped in.

"What does this mean?" said William, in a terrible voice. "Let us begin as we mean to go on. What excuse——"

Madame turned her eye upon her bridegroom.

"Pardon?" she inquired, freezingly.

She could not freeze William's anger, so hot it was.

"Where have you been?" said he, with a frown he had hitherto reserved for his *employés*.

"'Where 'ave you been?'" mimicked madame. "Hear the lordship! 'Where 'ave you been?' Is this my husband that loves me, and calls me his pink rose? Where are the endearments?" cried madame. "Am I not still the pink rose?"

"Endearments, you — you crimson rambler!" raged William. "Am I to ask you again, where have you been?"

"I have been, love," replied madame, pushing an auburn curl negligently into place, "to the office of our solicitor, for the purpose of making over my restaurant to my son."

William grew very pale, and struggled for words, but no words would come. At last he managed to break into the appalling silence with one inexpressive syllable.

"To—to—to—to——"

Charlie, in a blue lounge suit, and slapping a little cane against his leg, strolled in.

"Isn't he a little green marvel?" cried madame. "Isn't he a blue-eyed boy? 'Take off that gold ring, muvver,' he say to me; 'widows is thought wily,' he say. Such brain-power in one of his years—isn't it a miracle? See, then, *Monsieur le proprietaire!*"

Catching a well-known look in William's eye, Charlie made a graceful but hurried exit. Guillaume, displaying the emotion of a crocodile, turned to his galvanized late master.

"All zis buying and selling wizout ze money changin' 'ands," cried Guillaume, "again, zen, my poor friend, it 'as been done."

"Fourteen, and the owner of a restaurant!" cried madame.

"*Which way did 'e go?*" said the stepfather, and, catching up a soup-ladle, leapt out into the street.

NELSON KEYS, AS CAPTAIN HERCULES CHUTNEY, SINGING "THE FOUR-
Photo. by

THE VOGUE OF THE REVUE.

A SYMPOSIUM OF THE VIEWS OF FAMOUS AUTHORS ON THE SECRETS OF SUCCESSFUL REVUE WRITING.

What particular ingredients go to the making of a successful Revue? In view of the far-reaching success of the most popular Revues which have been presented recently, the subject is one of such absorbing interest from the point of view of theatrical and variety audiences that we have collected the opinions of the leading Revue authors of the day on "A Revue in the Making."

Mr. ARTHUR WIMPERIS,

Author of that phenomenally successful revue, "The Passing Show," at the Palace Theatre, and many other successes.

MY notion of genuine Revue is that it should form, from first to last, a humorous and witty commentary on current events, modes, manners, and personalities. I quite realize, however, that it is an open question whether an entertainment strictly on these lines would prove a success in the bigger theatres or music-halls.

There is something *intime* about genuine revue; an indefinable something which seems to communicate itself instantly from a small stage to a small auditorium, but which loses

FOOT-TEN BRIGADE" IN "THE PASSING SHOW," AT THE PALACE.
Foulsham & Banfield.

its way the moment a larger space has to be covered.

In proof of this, let me recall the success of the original "Follies" at the Apollo Theatre (for what was the bulk of their entertainment but a revue?) compared with their efforts to paint upon the larger canvas of the Empire or Alhambra Theatres.

It is probably owing to these considerations that revue at the larger music-halls has gradually become more and more spectacular, less and less topical, until to-day little remains except the name.

Catchy tunes and haunting melodies are, of course, essentials of genuine revue, but the present form of that entertainment often consists of a mere series of successful "song hits," as they are called, and depends largely for its success upon spectacular stage effects and chorus "business."

These things are excellent in their right proportion; personally, I can sit and watch them with great pleasure and contentment. My only quarrel is with their title; they do not, in themselves, constitute revue, as I understand it. In a word, they should figure as the seasoning, not as the dish.

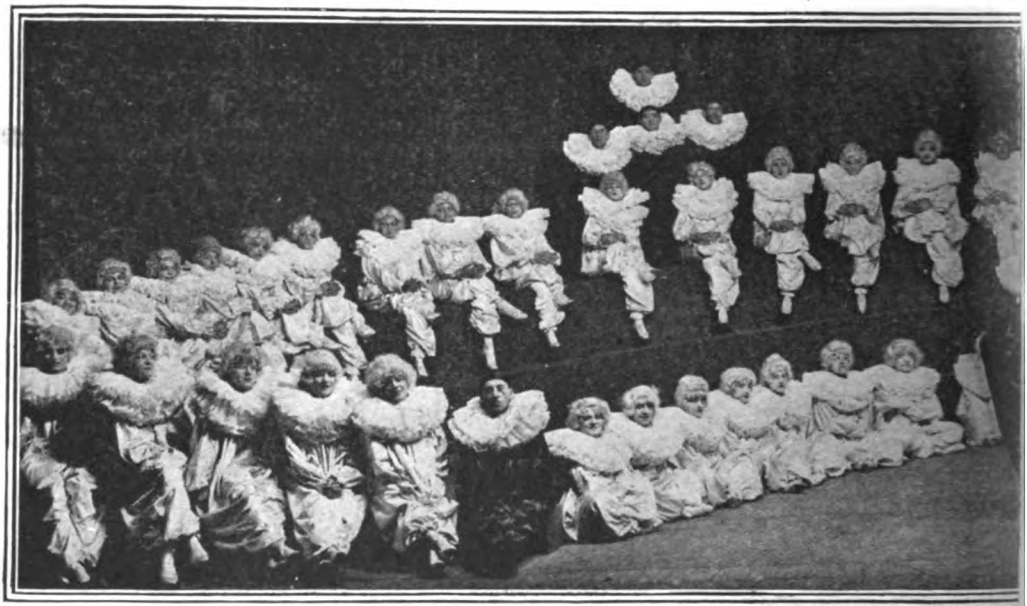
In the ideal revue, that is in the revue which none of us has yet succeeded in writing, the main idea, both words and music, of each number should arise naturally from its situation.

One of the least engaging features of revue in its present form is the dragging in of incongruous American numbers. Here the cart is put before the horse with a vengeance, a cart, moreover, quite unprovided with extenuating shafts of wit. Too often, instead of a good scene, capped by exactly the right song, which is an essential part of it, one gets a few meaningless lines, quite unconnected with anything that has gone before, terminating with an obvious music-cue.

Metaphorically, the symphony is drowned by the creaking of stage machinery. One is irresistibly reminded of the pantomime couplet:—

> A Piano in the Woods! Then here's my chance
> To execute my little song and dance!

Incidentally, it would be greatly to the advantage of American musical numbers if the lyrics were translated into English for the benefit of the stay-at-home Briton. Their accompanying melodies are often most fascinating, but too many artistes



OSCAR SHAW SINGING HIS "RAG-PICKER" SONG

appear to entertain a theory that ragtime should be "handed out" at the extreme pitch of the lungs.

Syncopation need not necessarily induce syncope, nor distance lend enchantment to Revue.

Mr. C. H. BOVILL,

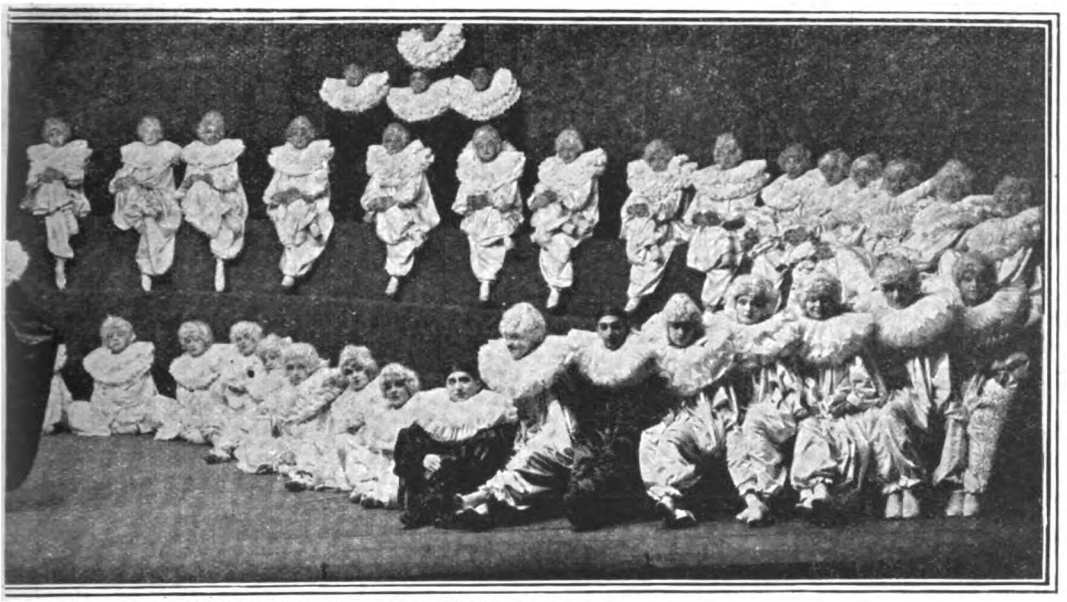
Part author of "All the Winners," "Everybody's Doing It," "Nuts and Wine," at the Empire Theatre, and part author of that enormously successful revue, "5064 Gerrard," at the Alhambra.

The particular ingredients which I regard as essential to the making of a suc essful revue at a big variety theatre are (1) One strong comedian, with a clear, resonant voice, who, in addition to being funny, should also be a good character actor. (2) One leading lady, with an attractive personality and the ability to "hand out" a song. (3) As much variety as possible in the constitution of the songs.

As a matter of personal opinion I may say that I think revues, with advantage, might be made much more topical than they generally are at the present time. Unfortunately, however, there is one great drawback to keeping a revue topical and to introducing from time to time topical incidents as they happen. This disadvantage lies in the fact that a large majority of the general public are not sufficiently well informed about current events. For all practical purposes the only public characters of whose movements the average audience seems to have anything like a working knowledge are a mere handful of well-known and well-advertised people, such as Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Winston Churchill, Horatio Bottomley, and, last but not least, Gaby Deslys. True, they may have heard of others, but from practical observation I have remarked with particular interest that they invariably resolutely refuse to laugh at them.

By the way, there is one point about the writing of a revue which one has to bear in mind with every line one writes, and that is the class and size of the house at which it is to be produced. Writing a revue for one of the larger variety theatres, such as that famous home of revue, the Alhambra, bears much the same relation to writing for an ordinary theatre like the Ambassadors, or the Gaiety, as scene-painting does to the painting of a picture designed for the walls of the Academy.

At the Alhambra, or the Empire, one has to get one's effects with big, broad splashes; delicacy of treatment, intimacy, lightness of touch, are impossible. The best-aimed shaft of verbal wit is apt to miss its mark. The appeal has to be made to the eye much more than to the ear.



IN "5064 GERRARD," AT THE ALHAMBRA.
Wrather & Buys.

Again, the majority of the audience wants to take its fare *à la carte* and not *table d'hôte*. Consequently, the revue-writer has to aim at providing a succession of short bright scenes, entirely disconnected and contrasted with one another as sharply as possible. Anything in the nature of a sustained plot is obviously useless when a good half of the audience does not begin to arrive for perhaps anything from half an hour to an hour after the curtain has risen.

In conclusion, I should like to add that it is my firm conviction that it would be of great assistance to revue-writers if ragtime were to be abolished by law—for though its strains may be pleasing, the irregularity of its rhythm makes its alliance to polished, witty, or graceful words an impossibility.

Mr. HARRY GRATTAN,

The popular author of "Odds and Ends" and "More," at the Ambassadors Theatre, "All Scotch," at the Apollo Theatre, and other successful revues.

If frankness is a virtue, then I can lay claim to be virtuous, for I frankly confess that for the life of me I cannot conscientiously say what particular ingredients are essential to the making of a successful revue. The taste of the public, like fashion, the weather, and other things, is constantly changing. It is never safe for an author to say—and act on the belief—that what the public wants and seems to like to-day, it will want and seem to like a few months, or maybe a few weeks, hence. Why? Simply because what the public wants and seems to like to-day it is quite likely to regard with icy, arctic glance a little later on.

I can, however, at least say that I don't think it is at all necessary for an author of a revue to be "topical." Of course, certain topical ideas may happen across his mind when he is "framing up" a revue which are quite likely to develop into big successes from a popular point of view. At the same time, should he happen to miss "topicalities," my own opinion is that his revue will probably not suffer one whit, jot, or tittle, or any other synonym.

The revue, as the public know it and see it on the English stage to-day, is not in the strict sense of the word a "review" of passing events. It is rather an effort on the part of the author, or authors, with the assistance of the musical composer and the rest of the company, to do their best to interest and amuse.

Personally, whenever I figure out a revue, I do so bearing in mind that although I should know the public taste to a certain extent, yet, if the public taste suggests that what I have given them is not precisely the sort of material they want, I am "sportsman" enough to appreciate that it is the provider of the

Photo. MISS SHIRLEY KELLOGG SINGING "WON'T YOU SEND ME THIS

would be "goods" who is at fault and not those who have come to inspect.

No, there are revues and revues. Some succeed, others fail. And yet I would dare hazard the opinion that the author of success or failure as in each case launched his revue vainful of confidence that he is giving to the public precisely and entirely what the public wants.

Obviously, primarily, it is essential that a writer of revues should interest and amuse, for surely there is no one bold enough to submit that the revue as we see it on the English stage to-day is produced to educate and elevate. If the author succeeds in "interesting and amusing" then he is successful. If he does not it will not take him long to

MLLE. DELYSIA AND M. MORTON IN THE MID-VICTORIAN EPISODE FROM "MORE," AT THE AMBASSADORS

BALLOON?" IN THE HIPPODROME REVUE, "PUSH AND GO." [*Wrather & Buys.*

the Ambassadors Theatre, as to how a revue writer should regard the eventual fate of his efforts when presented to the public :—

More odds and ends; but the deciding odds,
When this small effort ends, rests with the Gods
Two hours will tell if we've done well or erred :
We aim at triumph, but may hit "the bird."

Mr. ALBERT P. de COURVILLE,

Part author of "Hullo, Ragtime!" the first successful revue produced in London; "Hullo, Tango!" "Business as Usual," and "Push and Go," all of which revues were produced at the London Hippodrome.

One of the most essential features—perhaps *the* most essential feature—of a successful revue is comedy. The scenery, costumes, effects, and music are all, of course, important in their turn, but of such vital importance do I consider the comedian and his work, that I invariably mould the whole of my revue to suit his personality.

Another very essential factor in the building up of a successful revue is, I think, the "balance" of the show. This is apt to be rather underestimated, perhaps because it is not easily discernible among the parts of the construction, but from the expert point of view there is a vast difference between a well-balanced and an ill-balanced production. Indeed, I think that, although they would probably not be able to describe exactly what was wrong with the show, almost every member of an audience would unconsciously detect something "wrong" about an ill-balanced revue.

It is the vague smoothness, the unconscious dovetailing of the many scenes and features into a complete whole without the slightest jar or break which distinguishes the well-from the ill-balanced revue.

It would be fatal, for instance, to have two comedy scenes following each other, or two songs following without dialogue between them to ease the monotony. The proof of the importance of this "balance" lies in the fact that if two of the finest comedy scenes in the world were made to follow one another, the second one, even if it were fifty per cent. better than the first, would not carry half its real value.

Of course, it is an obvious impossibility to sit down and write a revue straight off as perhaps a book or a play might be written.

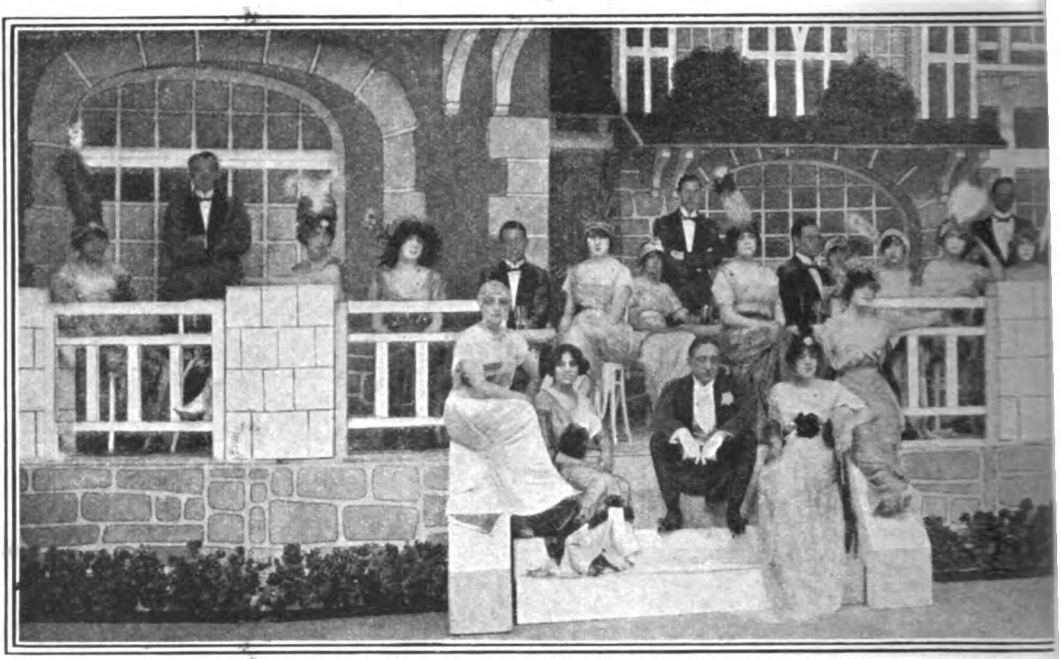


Photo. by] A SCENE FROM "EIGHTPENCE A MILE," AT THE ALHAMBRA.

To write a revue for the Hippodrome, for example, is very often the outcome of a year's hard work on my part. I do not mean to say that I devote the whole of that time to the actual writing of it, but every few days I collect scores of little papers from my pockets with pencil notes of rough ideas written on them and have them typed out, and set up in tabular form. Then when the right time arrives I go over them one by one, take out the best, and mould those I have selected into one complete whole.

The music has naturally to be selected before the final sequence can be arranged; this, too, I regard as a very important item, for it must be remembered that although at the time the song is sung its success may depend very largely on its lyrics, it is the tune the audience hum and whistle as they leave the theatre, and for the time, at least, the words are forgotten. The tune, then, must be one that will stick in the mind at a first hearing.

Finally, I may say that although in England a revue is not a revue in the strict sense of the word, and although topical allusions on matters of current interest are the exception rather than the rule, it is nevertheless necessary that our English revue, as we understand it at the present time, should at least contain some item of topical interest. It should, I think, also be kept up to date by the inclusion of scenes representing matters of passing interest.

Mr. FRED THOMPSON,

Part author of that most successful Alhambra revue, "Eightpence a Mile," "Alice-Up-To-Date," "Sugar and Spice," and "Violet and Pink," and author of many scenes in other Alhambra and Empire revues.

My own opinion is—although I know many revue-writers will not agree with me—that it is not necessary to be topical in a revue, more particularly for large houses like the Alhambra or Empire. As long as the author can succeed in being funny he will always have done quite enough to satisfy the public. Smaller theatres such as the Ambassadors or the Palace are, I think, the most suitable houses for topical revues. It is quite impossible to be "intimate" at the Alhambra or Empire with half your audience a tram journey away from the actors.

Of course, certain topics, particularly those that can be treated broadly, will "go" anywhere. Thus, my burlesque of the telephone system, which I claim to be the original, although several revues had similar scenes subsequent to "Alice-Up-To-Date," was equally successful in a large as a small theatre.

It is my experience that burlesques of plays are usually successful in revues, although they

SHOWING A DANCE BY MAURICE AND FLORENCE WALTON. ("*Daily Mirror.*")

have the obvious disadvantage of not appearing quite so amusing to those members of the audience who have not seen the original. Also the play the author has burlesqued may suddenly "train on" into a failure and be taken off, which is irritating both to the revue author and the "backers" of the said play.

In my opinion, it is absolutely essential that the author of a London revue must know his London, particularly the "night" side, and the author of a provincial revue, by the same token, must know his provinces. Incidentally I may remark that certain parts of the provinces take a deal of knowing. For instance, it may not be known to all STRAND MAGAZINE readers that on occasions revues are sent to a town where the wearing of a clean collar on Monday is put down as 'swank." Woe betide the author who attempts to be witty at such places. The "bird" —which, of course, you know is theatrical jargon for unmistakable signs of disapproval —is at once handed out to the comedian unless he is prepared to sacrifice all art, slap the *soubrette* on her bare shoulders—in towns such as I have described this always gets a big laugh—and call the musical conductor the most unflattering name he can think of at the moment.

By the way, it may be of interest if I say that all the revues I have written have been manufactured at night, any time from 9.30 p.m. to 3 a.m. in the morning, as I find that this is the only time that one can work without interruption. Also, I am in the habit of acting different scenes as I write them, and it is awkward, and takes time, if someone interrupts me at work, to have to explain why I am standing on my head behind a desk or making love to a chair.

Personally, although "I says it who shouldn't," I think that the practice of writing revues is one which should be discontinued. Our lunatic asylums are quite full enough as it is.

Mr. MAX PEMBERTON.

Part author of the popular London Hippodrome revue, "Hullo, Ragtime!" "Come Over Here," at the London Opera House, and many other successes.

A revue nowadays is chiefly successful when it is not a revue.

It differs from musical comedy because it does not often pretend to have a plot and its chameleon-like characters change their hues at frequent intervals. For all that they remain themselves, and while George Graves is George Graves all is well with the world.

At the beginning we made an effort to safeguard the revue idea, and Lloyd George was very precious to us. Soon we discovered that there were no more than three politicians at whom our public would laugh —and it was quite impossible to keep a popular novelist perpetually in the limelight. The British people will not sit, as the French delight to do, and hear mere badinage about its public men. There are few politicians in the public eye at any time, and the mere buffoons of literature do not interest a popular audience. So the revue idea passed and the extravaganza followed. It represents probably the nadir of any form of art—but there it is, and from the manager's standpoint there is the public, which is all that matters.

A revue is not written: it arrives.

The first thing necessary is the discovery of sufficiently tuneful musical numbers to permit a "producer" to design dances and pictures for the bevy of stage beauties with which every manager will have provided himself. These make or mar the entertainment. No revue can be a success which has not tuneful numbers, pretty girls to sing them, well-staged dances to give them ornament, and sufficiently original and taking effects to please an audience become critical of such attempts. Given these, the battle is half won. The rest is with the leading lady, the comedians—and the author.

Much, of course, depends upon the leading lady. She must be known to the public; she must have a personality and be an artiste. It does not matter very much whether her voice is considered by her friends to be better than the voice of Tetrazzini or Edwina. She must please and she must have charm. If she be able to act, so much the better. Miss Elsie Janis, by her charm and her gifts, helped Mr. Arthur Wimperis to establish the Palace as a revue house. Miss Ethel Levey has recently recreated the fortunes of the Empire; Miss Shirley Kellogg is permanently associated with Hippodrome fame. At the Ambassadors we have Mlle. Delysia; at the Alhambra Mlle. Gaby Deslys.

As necessary as the leading lady is the comedian. It has come to this nowadays, that your comedian plays in revue much as he used to play in pantomime. He gives sketches which would stand alone in a variety bill. He comes on to "make good" and must lose no time about it. Mere talk will not serve unless he be a George Graves. He must figuratively be treading upon a band-box all the time. Buffoonery is not resented. He is the "red-nosed" man clothed but not always in his right mind.

These people being safely shepherded in a theatre, the author looks in to see if he can do anything. Lyrics he will write, if they have not been already written in America. The comic scenes he must provide, though there is no absolute guarantee that they will be comic. He has already designed a framework for the whole show, and now at rehearsal he begins to fill it in. The succeeding "whole" is only to be revealed at dress rehearsal. The pieces of the puzzle are then put together, with surprising results sometimes.

But it is all very amusing and the public, apparently, cannot have too much of it. The whole town is to be flooded with revues which are not revues—though Heaven knows what they should be called! This possibly is of little interest to my friend Mr. Albert de Courville, whose youth keeps him buoyantly on the top of the flood. Nor, we may suppose, does M. Charlot or Mr. Alfred Butt cry out because of the water. The public likes this badinage and sees the beauty chorus with a single eye.

So why quarrel with the public?

MISS SHIRLEY KELLOGG AND MR. GERALD KIRBY SINGING "THE WEDDING GLIDE," IN "HULLO, TANGO!" AT THE LONDON HIPPODROME.

Photo. by Fontsham & Banfield.

SAM BRIGGS BECOMES A SOLDIER.

X.—An Official Mistake.

By RICHARD MARSH.
Illustrated by Charles Pears.

I DON'T know much about war, you know that; and the more I have seen the less I seemed to understand. But this I do know—that a good half of the things which have happened weren't exactly what were meant to happen. I don't know about other wars, but I do know that that is what seemed to me to be the funny part about this. I suppose that the strangest thing which has happened up to the present date is what people have come to know as the mystery of the poison gas. It came of what you might call a young woman playing with fire—in fact, with a good deal more than fire! If it hadn't been that Netta Swerts was a bit keen to take her fences without seeing what was on the other side, those German gentlemen would not have been taught a good deal more than they cared to learn, and the whole fashion of the war might have been changed.

It was that poison gas to which access could be had by turning a tap in that secret cellar. Netta, jumping too fast to her conclusions, had got her facts a little wrong. I won't say that Lieutenant Chandler wasn't to blame to say nothing of me for starting his belief in her. Indeed, it is no use trying to apportion the blame; we all of us had a finger in the pie; but still the truth remains that if Netta had not been so cocksure that she understood a good deal more than she did I think it is pretty probable that nothing would have happened as it did. Whether things would have been better for that is not a point on which I pretend to pronounce an opinion.

When Lieutenant Chandler turned that little brass tap, came out of the secret storehouse and shut the door, we stood waiting for something to happen. We had no more idea than the Man in the Moon what might happen, but I do know that our expectations were pretty keen.

"We got blown up here before," murmured Captain Durrant, alluding to the destruction of the battery; "perhaps we may be permitted to hope that exactly that sort of thing won't happen again."

It didn't; though I am bound to admit that I was conscious of an inclination to take myself as far away as I could. But nothing blew up—what, perhaps, was worse, something smelt. I had learnt from experience what the Germans could do in the way of bad smells; nothing I had hitherto seen of their powers in that direction could come within many miles of their achievement then. In a very few seconds we were all of us gasping for breath.

"I don't know what is going to become of this poison gas of yours," said Captain Durrant to Netta, "but it seems pretty clear that we are to be shown, in this immediate neighbourhood, something of what it can do, and as it is something against which it will be useless to attempt to fight, the sooner we take ourselves off to a neighbourhood where breathing does not mean death the better. Perhaps you will suggest which direction it is best for us to try to take?"

It was an easy question to ask; a more difficult one to answer. The whole air was becoming so much asphyxiation. It was useless for me to suggest that the cellar should be reopened and the tap turned off;

the probability seemed to be that death would ensue before any good could be gained. The poison seemed to act on me more quickly than on the others; it seemed to deprive me both of speech and sight. I had just sense enough left to realize that in a very few seconds I should fall unconscious to the ground, and then Heaven only knew what might happen. We must have presented an extraordinary spectacle, reeling in all directions like beings in some strange stage of helpless drunkenness. I was actually falling when I became hazily aware that I was not only being lifted off my feet but being borne through the air. How far I was carried I had no notion, but on a sudden I became hazily aware that the world had ceased to be.

How long it was before consciousness returned I could not say. I found myself wondering where I was. I was still out of doors, sitting up, looking about me at people whom presently I began to recognize. There was still an unpleasant quality in the air; my head reeled, but I could breathe. People were about me on all sides; standing and looking down at me were Sparrow on my left and Netta on my right. Netta, I afterwards learnt, it was who had carried me in her arms to a place of safety—a nice position for a non-commissioned officer in the British Army! Rain was falling heavily; that was what, I suspected, had done me more good than anything. It seemed to cleanse the atmosphere and drive away that horrible gas. My condition mended every moment, but I was quickly undeceived if I thought that I was out of the wood. When I struggled to my feet and tried to move I was instantly overcome by the former fumes. I should have come down with force upon the ground had I not been caught and upheld by Netta.

A whispered consultation took place; what they said to each other I could not tell, but I knew they spoke about me. Some general conclusion, I presume, was arrived at, because I became dimly aware that men were moving off—movements, however, in which I was unable to join. I take it that I was again left to Netta's tender mercies. When, once more, I returned to life it was by degrees borne in upon me that I was back again in the "Retreat" at the farm. I moved; someone else moved also. I looked round—there was Netta's mother, busying herself with work of some kind. When she saw that I was restored to consciousness she exclaimed something in Flemish—Netta herself came in.

"WE MUST HAVE PRESENTED AN EXTRAORDINARY SPECTACLE, REELING IN ALL DIRECTIONS LIKE BEINGS IN SOME STRANGE STAGE OF HELPLESS

"Thank the good spirits you are still alive!"

Crossing to where I had managed to gain a sitting position, she began to busy herself with good offices.

"How long have I been here?"

"It is now nearly a day; also a night. You were at first unconscious, then struggling for life. It has been impossible to say which the result was to be. But to-day something has happened; for the present, at least, the gas seems to have gone. All night the world seems to have been dying of suffocation;

ORDINARY SPECTACLE, REELING IN ALL DIRECTIONS LIKE BEINGS IN SOME STRANGE STAGE OF DRUNKENNESS."

at last it seems possible for people again to breathe."

"Where are my friends?"

She shrugged her shoulders.

"They are everywhere. Many of them have suffered—how is it possible to be helped?—but most of them have fared better than you."

"And the Germans?"

"Everywhere they seem to be lying like dead flies. It would seem that their intention was to destroy the world, to suffocate all the men who are in it. But it is they themselves who have suffered most. They have been taught a lesson which they will not easily forget. I do not think we shall hear much more from them about poison gas. In the German camp at Laeken they tell me that not a man is left alive, that it is still impossible to stay there and breathe; that for miles in one direction it is impossible to do that. If destruction was their intention they must have succeeded better than they hoped—but it is among themselves that death has come. And you — you have suffered, but you seem better."

I was ; I could stand upon my feet, and I could eat—I ate an excellent breakfast. The use of my limbs seemed to have been restored to me. I struggled to my feet ; my legs were my own ; it seemed that I could move as I chose. A sound came to us from without, the meaning of which I had learnt to understand—it was a signal that friends were at hand. Apparently the signaller was a person whom both women recognized. The moment the sound was heard mother and daughter hurried out. It was some minutes before Netta returned with a man clad in some curious garments. As regards costume, at that time most of the natives were not particular. They were not in a position to pick and choose. To have clothes of any sort was something. He was a biggish man, with fair hair, who wanted shaving. He might have cut an odd figure in a London street, but I liked the look of him—he was full of smiles. Netta introduced him.

"This is my cousin, Otto. He is an aviator. I do not know what he calls his aeroplane, or where he got it from—do not ask too many questions !—or how long ago it is since it was German. He says he has great news. Do you fly ? "

I wondered if she could be in earnest; it seemed that she was.

"I don't know if you think that in the English Army every man can fly ; if so, you may set me down as an exception. I don't."

"But at least you are willing to fly ; you are not afraid ? "

I wondered if the question was asked maliciously ; anyhow it was one which it was awkward to answer. In other circumstances it was one to which, I think, I might have dared to answer Yes. Her cousin's attitude rendered that impossible. He actually scolded her for talking to me in such a strain.

"Netta, you go too far. Herr Briggs, I must ask you to excuse my cousin. Netta, you will find that Herr Briggs is a better pilot than I am. It is his modesty which makes him say No. For myself, do not imagine that I am an aviator, that I have been properly taught, that I know anything at all. The little I have learnt I have picked up by accident. Every time I ascend I do not expect to come down alive. But what does it matter ? In Belgium we want men who can fly ; if we want to learn we must teach ourselves. It is not for us to pick and choose."

I had wondered if she had been speaking seriously ; I wondered still more if he was. I had never before met an aviator, a flying-man, who had admitted that he could not fly. I suppose it was because she saw the look with which I regarded him that she tried to set my mind at ease.

"You perceive, Mr. Briggs, that my cousin is a person of humour ; he would make of you a coward. How far have you come to-day ? "

The inquiry was addressed to Otto. He laughed again.

"It is true I have come some way. That is by good fortune and accident rather than because any credit is due to me. I came upon my aeroplane by chance—I stole it—I am here. Really and truly it is a miracle that it is not destroyed and I not dead. You have heard about this plague of death ? " I nodded. "It would almost seem that someone must have been playing the Germans tricks ; they have been killed like flies—by their own horrible inventions. I came to a place where they all of them seemed dead. It seemed to have been some kind of flying-ground. Scattered about were three aeroplanes, one of a sort which I had never seen before. I am of a character like Netta. When there is any madness about I am best suited. With me were two friends, both real aviators—one in particular. He said to me, 'I have never seen a machine like this before.' I said to him, 'Then, let us see what it can do.' But he had more sense—both he and my other friend—because I was a lunatic he was not disposed to join me. I got into the pilot's seat. They tried to get me out of it again, but I was not to be moved. It is for four pilots, this machine ; there are two engines, two seats, two everything. Since, if my friends refused to come, I should be alone, it seemed useless to attempt to do anything. But I was more insane than usual. I said to Albert, one of my friends : 'I will set the two engines in motion ; if you will help me to start I will see what can be done.' They laughed ; they thought I was jesting. They did not see how a machine requiring four pilots could be worked by one. However, the engines were started. Albert kept the machine steady—off I went ! I tell you I was a little taken by surprise when I found that I was moving. The sensation was peculiar. As I went up into the air I thought that my end had come. The engines being once started, it seemed impossible that they should be stopped by only a single man. Never was I in such a position before ! How I came to manage any steering is a mystery. It was no thanks to me. To

persons below I must have presented a curious spectacle. I succeeded better than I should have thought was possible. Somehow I made my way across country—if there is one thing I can do it is steer. I made for my aunt's farm, and here I am. I knew that if I wanted the assistance of a person as mad as myself that here I should get it. My cousin tells me, Herr Briggs, that you will give me any assistance I may require. Shall I be so fortunate as to find in you a kindred spirit ? "

Netta did not wait for me to answer. She gave for me the reply which was required—not the reply which I should have given, but the one which was suited to her own frame of mind.

" Indeed, Otto, but I know Herr Briggs very well. There is nothing he cannot do, as is the case with most of the English soldiers. As for courage, I shall not be surprised to learn that already he has gained the V.C."

I was surprised to hear it—her assurance. As for my being a person who could turn his hand to anything—a sort of Jack of all trades—that is exactly where she was wrong. I was the last person in the world who could be called a handy man. About aeroplanes I knew nothing. I had not the slightest notion how to pilot one or what was the proper thing to do should I be so unfortunate as to find myself in one which was up in the air. The young man's story of his own adventures made the prospect of venturing in the one in which he had travelled truly appalling. I should have thought that that would have appealed to the meanest intelligence—even Netta's. To my astonishment that was what it did not do. Directly she opened her mouth I realized that the pair of them were mad together.

" How far have you come ? " she inquired.

" I cannot exactly tell you—quite a distance."

" Then, evidently you are quite safe; the second time you will be safer still. Certainly, Mr. Briggs, you and my cousin will make an excellent pair."

I was not at all of her opinion. On the contrary, I was convinced that any chance of safety there might have been would be destroyed by my presence in the machine. But she would not listen.

" But I have not told you," he explained, " why I wish someone to come at once. I have been told of the accumulation of gas which you found up here upon the hill, by which everywhere the Germans are being destroyed. It is because I heard of a similar store in the field in which I stole this aeroplane that I am so anxious, Herr Briggs, that you should come with me to complete the work which you have here so excellently begun."

" That is a great notion ! " Netta exclaimed. " After all, Otto, you are splendid ! It only needs another object-lesson—I do not fancy that in this country the Germans will use gas again."

" That is what I thought," Otto exclaimed. " They do not like to be poisoned themselves, these fellows. Use it against themselves, and you will soon find that they are willing to make it a rule that in this war nothing in the shape of poison gas is to be employed again. So long as it is not employed against them they are willing to use it against others for four-and-twenty hours a day. For once in a way they have met their match. I hear that thousands have been killed. You and I, if the conditions are only what we would desire, might be able to drive the whole lot of them across the frontier—so many of them, that is, as are still alive."

Netta did not wait for her cousin to add any more remarks. She took me by the arm.

" Captain Briggs," she said.

" I'm not yet captain," I told her. " That I shall never be."

" You will be after this," she declared, I knew better. " After this you will be General—you will see ! "

It was not because I was deluded by any such absurdity that I permitted her to tighten her grip upon my arm and lead me out into the open. Frankly, I do not know why it was, I had not yet recovered from my distressing adventures of the previous day. I was unable to offer adequate resistance to the pressure which she put upon me. The ridiculous suggestion which Netta made seemed to add to my mental confusion.

" If I came with you should I be of any assistance ? Three in such a position is perhaps better than two. I promise I will let loose all that gas."

Otto greeted the madness of such a proposal as if it were the finest which could have been made. We had gone out of doors ; guided by him we were looking at the most extraordinary machine I have ever seen. I did not understand it in the least. What it meant I had not the faintest notion. It appeared, from the way she talked, that Netta understood it much better than I did.

" You perceive," she observed, " Herr

Briggs, that this is a double machine; in fact, it is two in one. It must move through the air at a terrific speed."

"Indeed," exclaimed Otto, "it moves so fast that it is not easy to be sure of the direction in which it is going. Halloa! It seems as if someone were coming. Surely these are your English compatriots!"

While we stood staring at the curious object which Netta's cousin assured me was an aeroplane, there came moving towards us through the trees down the hill two men who, as soon as they came in sight, I was very sure were what Otto called my compatriots. They were Bob Sparrow and Lieutenant Chandler. Apparently they had been conscious of our presence for some little time, and only because of that had ventured to make themselves known. Sparrow was the first to speak.

"Sam!" he exclaimed, "thank goodness you're still alive! We have been hunting for you all the morning."

Lieutenant Chandler made straight for the flying-machine, wasting no time in preliminaries.

"Whose is this?" he asked. Otto laughed.

"You ask more, Herr Lieutenant, than we can tell you. It is stolen property. How it came here I cannot tell you, except that by a miracle it came with me."

The irregularity of the transaction did not seem to trouble Mr. Chandler at all.

"That's luck! Isn't it their new double biplane? It's just the thing we want! How many will it carry?"

"That is more, Herr Lieutenant, than I can tell you; I came in it alone."

"But——" the Lieutenant paused to stare. "You can't drive a thing like that alone!"

Otto laughed. "I do not pretend to be a 'driver.' It was not driven, but somehow it came. Properly, I imagine it requires a crew of four, but it can be worked by one, as I have proved. How many it can carry beyond the crew I could not decide. I fancy six or eight. You are a pilot, Herr Lieutenant?"

"Of the ordinary aeroplane, but not of a thing like this. If you worked a thing like this at first sight, single-handed, you must be something remarkable."

Otto laughed again; I never met such a man for laughter. "Mine was the courage of ignorance, Herr Lieutenant; I am like the horseman who, because he has never been on a horse before, rides anything. It is his ignorance which gives him courage—and luck. Will the Herr Lieutenant pilot us?"

"Us? Who are us?" Chandler stared—as well he might! The cousin smiled. To him everything seemed to be a joke—nothing seemed to be dangerous.

"All of us, including my cousin, if she will come."

"Certainly I will come if I can be of any use. I cannot manage an aeroplane, but what does that matter in the face of what we have seen? It seems that all that is wanted is a light heart."

"It appears that, after all, a light heart is something; one hears so much of aeroplanes that with a little willingness one may perhaps do more with than one supposes."

The Belgian's theory seemed to tickle Mr. Chandler.

"Scientific people may be of a different opinion, but in the light of actual experience there seems to be something in what you say. If all are volunteers, including the lady, there will be five of us."

"There will be five of us," announced Sparrow, "if, as you say, sir, all are volunteers. But as I have never been in a flying-machine of any kind, and am no mechanic, I don't see how my presence will be of any assistance."

"It will be as much as mine," I hastened to add. "There are a good many things I can't do, and anything in which a touch of the mechanic is required is perhaps among my strongest."

Lieutenant Chandler cut the discussion short, with an air of grim amusement which scarcely suggested Otto's continuous careless laughter.

"Good! Then this airship bids fair to carry a remarkable crew. Let us hope that good luck will continue to attend us. As Sparrow and I came up we thought that you looked as if you were preparing to restart. May I ask in what direction?"

The cousin explained, as well as he could. The conditions caused by the escaping gas seemed to have disorganized the entire country. What Otto was I could not make out—whether he was attached to some regular force, or was merely a loafer looking out for trouble. It seemed that he and his two friends had been strolling about in search of what they could find. They had come upon the field which, as Otto had told us, contained the three aeroplanes. Germans seemed to be everywhere, either dead or dying, or in a state of what, in different circumstances, would have been regarded as piteous disorganization. Men were scattered over that particular field incapable of doing anything. The reputation of the place seemed to be well

known all over the neighbourhood—as a centre of iniquity. It had been turned by the murderous Germans into a sort of chemical laboratory; it was strange how easily they seemed to contrive such things. Somewhere in this field they had managed a rough sort of building in which they manufactured one of the many varieties of the diabolical stuff which was known to the world as poison gas. Mr. Chandler seemed to have heard of it; but not with the knowledge which marked both Otto and Netta. According to them the purport of the gas was two-edged. It was to be used as a weapon of attack as well as of defence, as something in the face of which it would be impossible for us to advance and force them to unwilling retreat. The theory had been excellent, the practice not quite so good. Advantage had been taken of the huge quantities of the stuff which had been stored to use for purposes for which they were not prepared. It did not seem to have occurred to them that this might easily become a weapon which could destroy them as well as us.

It must have been a sight to see us start! Although the consequences were among the most serious which had hitherto marked the war, the way we started to set about it was certainly not of a kind to suggest gravity. Five of us in that weird-looking machine, which none of us understood, and which I do not mind admitting I would have given a goodish sum to keep out of.

Lieutenant Chandler was at what we supposed to be the main steering-wheel, about the centre. Otto was on his right; Sparrow, who probably was of no more use than I was, upon his left. Netta and I were standing on a platform which was suspended from the pilots'.

"They will have you first," Otto declared; "you are in the place of danger. If anyone starts to shoot, you will act as cover for us."

Something of the kind had occurred to me, but when the engines started to move no time was given to enable me to consider matters of that kind. The noise the engines made! the pace at which we moved! the rapidity with which all of us darted from the ground and seemed in an instant to be in mid-air! Whether it was the amateurish way in which the machine was being driven, which bid fair to shake the whole thing to pieces, or whether it was the rapidity with which we were torn through space, which had the curious effect of causing the world itself to vanish from sight—which of these things affected me most I cannot say, but I know that I was left without any capacity for either thought or action. I was vaguely conscious that Otto was shouting to the Lieutenant.

"What do you think of this?" he seemed to be saying. "We are going at over a hundred of your English miles an hour, and yet we have only just begun to move. I believe we could double our speed if we chose."

"Don't trouble," the Lieutenant answered. "This is fast enough for us." I thought what a sensible man he was. "We shall all of us be blown to pieces by the force of the gale we ourselves create."

I dare say we should have been had there been time, but there was not. Where we were, towards what point of the compass we were moving, I had not the faintest notion. I had no goggles, nothing to shield my eyes. To all intents and purposes I might have been a blind man moving through pitch blackness; so far as seeing anything was concerned I found I had better keep my eyes fast closed. And then the temperature! It was a lovely day; on the ground below it had been almost too hot; up there in the vastness of space—true enough, there was the sun, but warmth there was none. I doubted if there had been a breath of air below, but up there there was a ceaseless, penetrating air, which cut you to the bone. I should have liked to ask to be taken down before all life was frozen out of me. Suddenly there was an exclamation from Netta, which seemed to be addressed particularly to me.

"Look out! They're firing at us! Hold as tight as you can."

It was easy enough for her to talk, but had she not caught hold of me, I believe I should have fallen to the ground. I am free to admit that I doubt if I was ever so startled in my life; it was a frightful sound to have come unexpectedly from inconceivable distances below. Otto, who, I was becoming more and more convinced, was merely a lunatic, broke into a roar of laughter, as though there were anything funny in having a bullet whistle close to your ear in such a situation; and then to have him cap his conduct with the exclamation which followed!

"Don't worry! Nothing to agitate yourselves about! That bullet missed us by quite twelve inches. If that man was shooting up to his general average he must be a sniper of value. Halloa! he is trying his hand again. The fellow must be the champion shot in the German army."

Whether the fellow was or not I didn't care. It seemed incredible that his shots weren't flukes. I was convinced that that

second shot skimmed across my cheek. Precisely what happened I can't say, but I do not believe that whoever it was who actually caused the machine to descend did it on purpose. The way he did it made it evident that it was not by design.

"What is it, Otto?" demanded Netta. "Take us up again! You will break us all to pieces if you don't."

No one answered: a fact which in itself was ominous. We began to jerk about in a fashion which could not have been done on purpose. We had reached the ground.

I was shot from the machine to a distance of I do not know how many feet. That I was not killed outright was in itself, perhaps, a miracle. I think that Otto and the Lieutenant were responsible for our descent between them. Of course, the wonder was that it was not infinitely worse than it was. With the greatest of ease nothing might have been left of us but fragments. As a matter of fact, I was the only person who was actually parted from the machine. Of course, it was not pleasant to find that I had fallen on to a heap of German corpses, but the matter might have been so very much worse that I was quite ready to overlook that. That I did not even lose consciousness was obvious when I found myself struggling to gain my footing, holding a rifle in either hand. Whose the rifles were I had not a notion; they certainly were not mine. I had my wits about me sufficiently to try to make out where I was. A voice exclaimed:—

"Hands up, you English fool! Or would you prefer us to blow your head off your shoulders?"

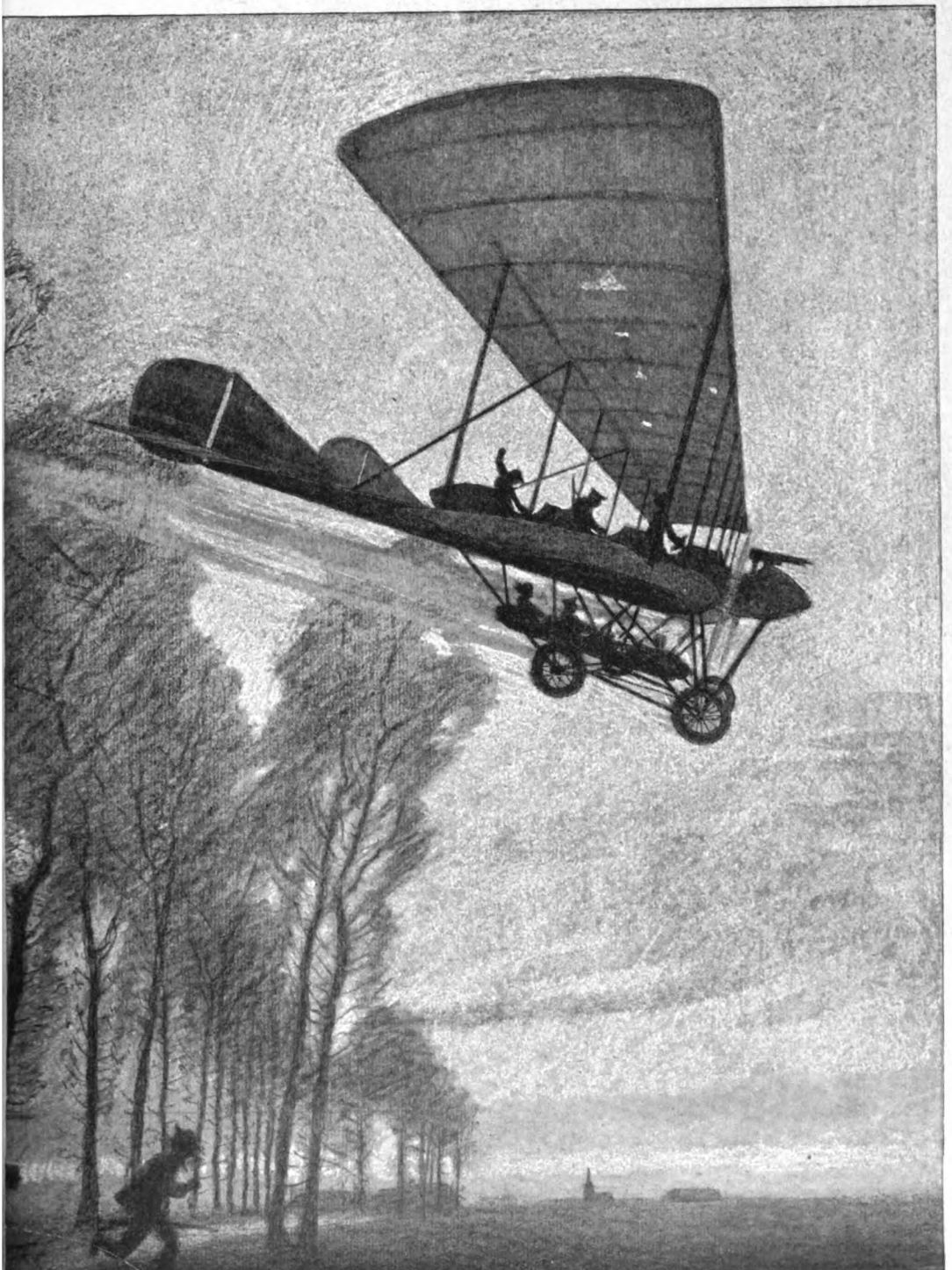
Really, it was a question which required no formal answer. I raised my hands, a rifle in each, and I looked to see who the speaker was. The same harsh voice came again. In front of me, on the other side of the corpses, was a body of men, some seventy or eighty German soldiers, pressing forward in disorderly array, no friendly glances on their faces. The speaker was in front—a tall, middle-aged man, red-faced, with waxed moustaches.

"Be careful, and drop those rifles if you wish to keep yourself alive."

On the whole, I did wish to keep myself alive, but I had become so used, each time I met a German, to being advised what to do if I wished to avoid instant death, that, impressed as I had been at the beginning, I took it for granted that I should still continue to live even when threatened by the Germans. I lowered the rifles, but I did not drop them. Where the aeroplane and the remaining passengers were I could not make out. I supposed they were behind. That they were at least as comfortably placed as I was I sincerely hoped. I seemed to be standing in front of an open door in some kind of building. I thought of the structure which it was stated was used as a storehouse for the gas. If I stepped back and closed the door I might at least get even with them before the fellows in front made an end of me. The same idea seemed to have occurred to them. The man with the waxed moustaches seemed again disposed to shout himself hoarse.

"Move away from that door! Step forward, do not step back!" There followed a string of strong German language; at that they are every bit as good as we are! Exactly what he said I could not tell; I was still no good at understanding German, but I was

"PRECISELY WHAT HAPPENED I CAN'T SAY, BUT I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT WHOEVER



IT WAS WHO ACTUALLY CAUSED THE MACHINE TO DESCEND DID IT ON PURPOSE."

"I HAVE A HAZY, INDISTINCT IDEA OF SEEING MYSELF MOUNTING THROUGH SPACE, THROUGH CLOUDS OF YELLOW SMOKE, IN A BLAZE OF BLINDING, ROARING FLAME."

prepared to bet a trifle that my guess was not far out. "Guns up! Take aim! At the word 'fire!' shoot him dead. Do not miss him—make certain he is dead. At the word of command!'

I am not suggesting that I am attempting to reproduce in English the words he employed in German, but I am pretty sure that that is what they meant. It was not very nice to be confronted by all those guns, the muzzles of which were within a foot or two of where I stood, nor was the position improved by the conviction that the contents of a large number of them would certainly hit me if I pressed the national patience a little bit too far. I was hardly entitled to blame them even if I was riddled with lead. I can hardly see how I could have excused my conduct in making such an untimely appearance in their midst by means of such an unexpected plunge from the skies. Had I been wise I should have dropped the rifles, which, after all, were not mine, and yielded myself a meek and apologetic prisoner. That is what I ought to have done; I ought, at least, to have said that I was sorry, had I been in a proper frame of mind.

But I was not; I was in quite a different spirit. It would have been strange, if you begin to think the matter over, if, after my adventures of the morning, I had been disposed to show such beautiful submission. From the moment in which I had opened my eyes in the Retreat at the farm I had been in a state in which I hardly knew if I was standing on my head or my heels. Indeed, my whole existence during the last few days had been of a nature which reminded me of the thrilling dramas which one sees in the picture-palaces, where, as each scene follows another on the screen, you may be thrilled and startled, but you are also a little bewildered. The happenings which chased each other were not a kind to cool the blood and induce you to offer yourself a meek victim to whatever hardship Fate—or the cinema-man—might bring you.

Therefore, probably, it was on that account that I dropped nothing and did not yield myself a submissive prisoner. Instead, I ducked, moved towards the back and not the front, slipped into the house and closed the door. It was only when the door was closed that that officer with the harsh voice seemed to realize what had happened. Whether, then, he kept his head and the order he issued was quite the one he meant to give I can't say. I only know that every gun handled by his men seemed to be fired at once, that every bullet seemed to penetrate either window, wall, or door—obviously the building was very badly built—and although I have reason to express my belief that not one of them seriously damaged me, they produced an effect which had much more serious consequences on the world at large. Yet here again the effect was of a kind which renders it extremely difficult to describe in detail exactly what it was.

I can only say that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the place was a storehouse for the extremely inflammable gas of which the Germans were supposed to be so unnecessarily fond, and that that sensible officer caused his minions to blow it up.

I can only add that, so far as I was concerned, that was the end of the world for me. The adventures of the morning seemed to have joined in leaving me with my head more mad than sane. The wild and, as it seemed to me, purposeless flight in that strange airship; the fashion of its ascent; the more amazing manner of its coming down—drop rather than ordered descent; the lucky leap from that unimaginable height and unexpected return to solid soil before I had a clear notion that the earth was reaching up to greet us; the ghastly alighting-place—that small series of adventures, following each other so quickly, was enough to add the last touches to a brain and body which the happenings of the last few days seemed to have brought to a point at which nothing could be left to bear.

And then those few mad moments in which I was hazily aware that there was nothing left to expect except the last agonies of death; owing to the bewildered officer's loss of his presence of mind there had burst a flood of bullets into my unintentional refuge—which was no hiding-place—had it been built of paper?—of what had happened so far I remembered something, but nothing whatever of what had followed. I learnt afterwards that thousands of gallons of gas might have been in that unsubstantial storehouse. The hail of bullets had set them loose. First came the suffocating air; then the flashing flame; the amazing explosion. Then for me, as has been written already, the end of the world. The whole country-side was peopled with unsuspecting Germans, among them at least one Englishman. And the most amazing part of it is that I have a hazy, indistinct idea of seeing myself mounting through space, through clouds of yellow smoke, in a blaze of blinding, roaring flame.

Next month: "On the Way Home."

A Confession-Book for Artists.

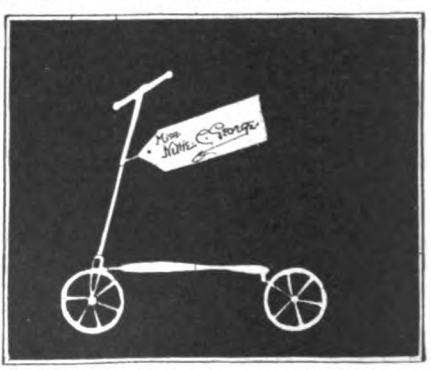
BY OUR READERS.

We reproduce on this and the following pages a selection from the vast number of drawings submitted by readers in response to our recent invitation to contribute to this section: but where so many showed such a high standard of merit, it was no easy matter to choose those best worthy of reproduction.

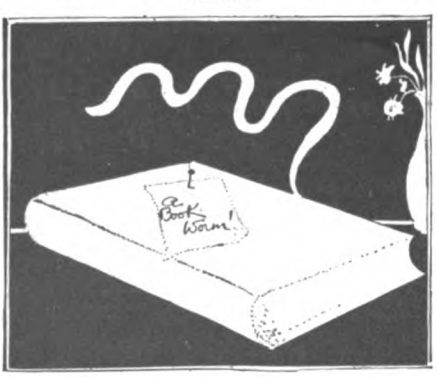
1 YOUR IDEAL OF A MAN.

2 AT WHAT PERIOD OF HISTORY HAVE WOMEN WORN THE MOST BECOMING COSTUME?

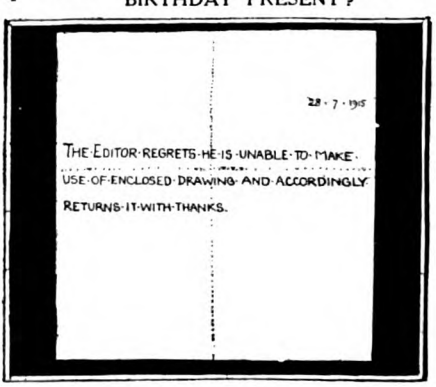
3 IN HOW FEW LINES CAN YOU DRAW A BABY?



4 WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE BEST FOR A BIRTHDAY PRESENT?

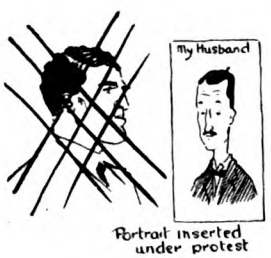


5 IF YOU WERE NOT AN ARTIST, WHAT WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO BE?



6 YOUR PET AVERSION.

MISS NELLIE C. GEORGE, 46, West Kensington Mansions, West Kensington.



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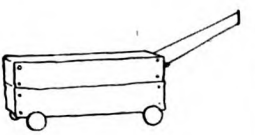

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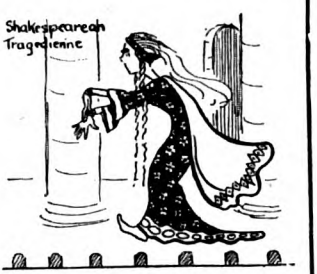

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MISS MARGARET C. BUTCHER, 32, Pemberton Gardens, Highgate, N.

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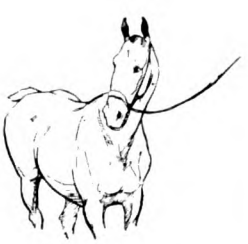

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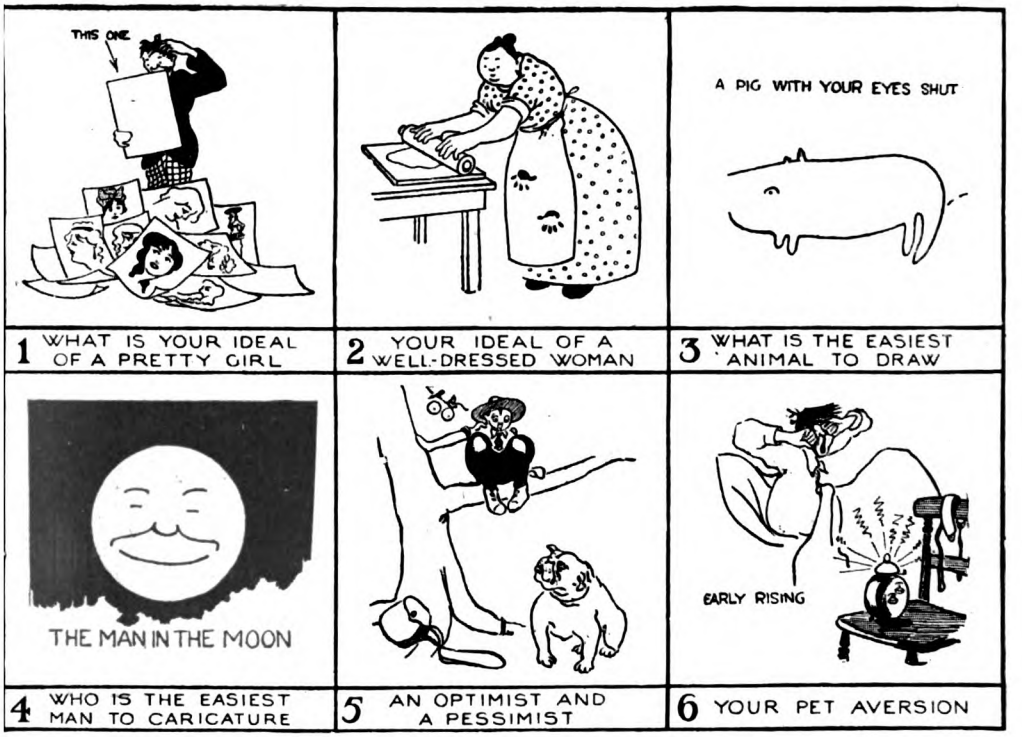
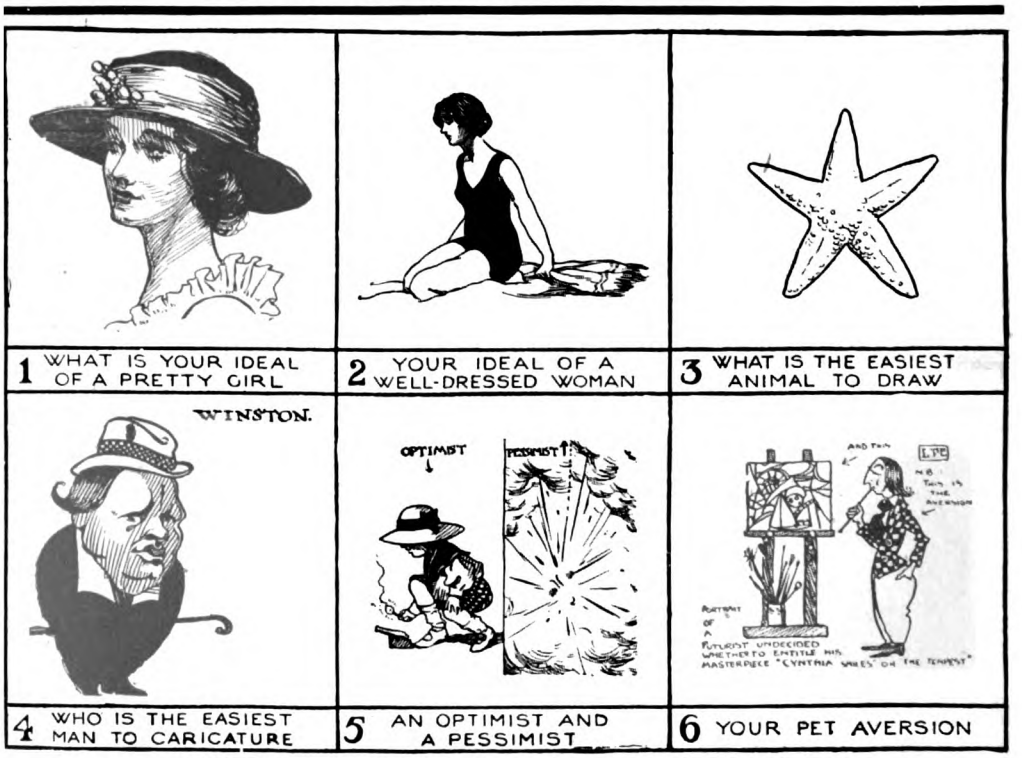
6 YOUR PET AVERSION

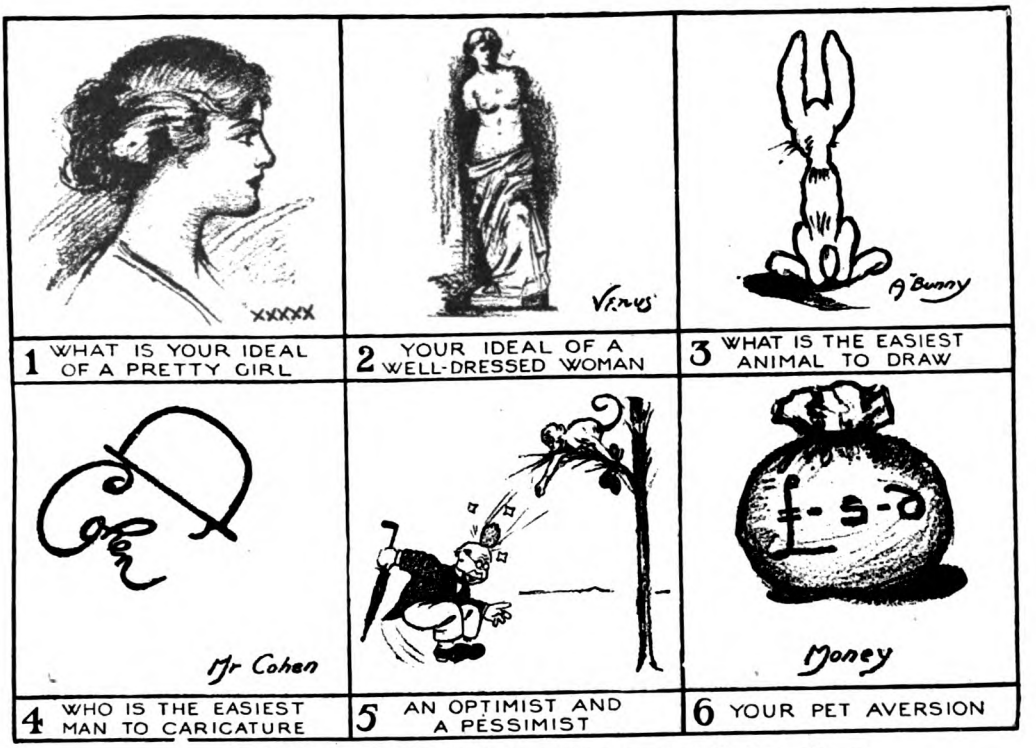
MISS L. PINE COFFIN, Seacroft, Exmouth, S. Devon.



MR. A. W. SWANN, 13, Victoria Road, Retford, Notts.

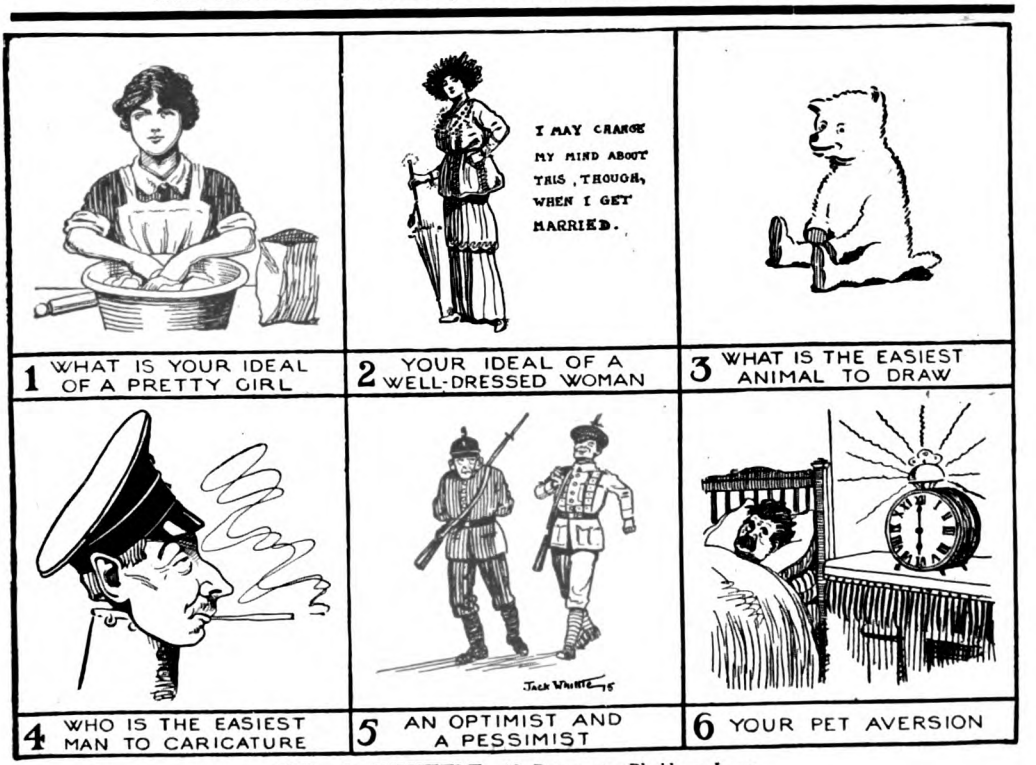


LESLIE F. EVERETT, 67, Goldhurst Terrace, Finchley Road, S. Hampstead.



1 WHAT IS YOUR IDEAL OF A PRETTY GIRL
2 YOUR IDEAL OF A WELL-DRESSED WOMAN
3 WHAT IS THE EASIEST ANIMAL TO DRAW
4 WHO IS THE EASIEST MAN TO CARICATURE
5 AN OPTIMIST AND A PESSIMIST
6 YOUR PET AVERSION

MR. HOWARD FORREST, Oaklands, Risingholme Road, Wealdstone, Harrow.



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MR. J. WHITTLE, 12, Bottomgate, Blackburn, Lancs.

MR. J. L. HOLIDAY, 399, Chester Road, Old Trafford.

MR. J. FAIRHURST, 16, Greenough Street, Wigan.

A Photographic Confession-Book.

We invite our readers to contribute a set of photographs taken by themselves, in reply to the questions on this page. The following photographs will give some indication of the kind of thing required. The more originality displayed the better.

Photographs should be addressed "Photographic Editor," at this office, before January 1st next. All selections used will be paid for.

1 Your best child-portrait.
(From babies up to five years old.)

2 The best portrait you have ever taken—man or woman.

3 The most picturesque scene you have ever photographed.

4 Your best animal photograph.

5 The funniest subject you have ever taken.

This apparently terrible scene is but a clever illusion. Two sticks were run into the ground and gaiters and boots placed on them, while the hat is intended to add to the actuality of the scene. The girl, who appears to be immersed up to her knees, is merely kneeling.

6 THE PHOTOGRAPH YOU CONSIDER THE BEST YOU HAVE EVER TAKEN—NOT INCLUDING ANY OF THE ABOVE SUBJECTS.

How Much Land Does a Man Require?

By

COUNT TOLSTOY

Translated from the Russian by Alder Anderson.

Illustrated by Warwick Reynolds.

The following story is one of the parables in which Tolstoy chose to set forth his creed of life. But considered simply as a piece of fiction there are few things more striking, or more vividly related, than the description of the grasping land-shark who, striving to obtain a great estate, wins six feet of earth. The story has been specially translated for "The Strand Magazine."

THE elder sister, who had married a shopkeeper in town, was paying a visit to her younger sister, a peasant's wife. While drinking tea, she boasted of the life she led in town; according to her, she lived at her ease, always wore pretty clothes, and even her children were neat and trim; she only ate and drank what she liked, and, when she wanted amusement, she had the choice between a walk and the theatre.

The younger sister, somewhat piqued, retorted by disparaging the lot of a shopkeeper and vaunting that of a peasant.

"You make a great mistake if you imagine I would ever change places with you," she declared. "Our life here may be dull, but, at least, it is not always poisoned by the dread of to-morrow. You are well off one day and perhaps a beggar the next, whereas we, if we are never likely to be rich, can always count on a crust of bread."

"Yes," sneered the other, "like the pigs and the calves. However diligently your husband may work, you will never know what it is to feel at your ease. You were born in squalor—you will live and die in squalor, and it will be the same with your children."

Pokhom, the husband of the younger sister, reclined on the top of the stove and gave an idle ear to the women's chatter.

"All that is true enough," he reflected. "Our one trouble is that we have not all the land we need. Ah! If only I had sufficient land, not even the Devil himself could frighten me."

The women finished their tea, tidied up, and went to bed.

Not a word of what had been said had escaped the ears of the Devil, who was crouching behind the stove. Nothing could please him better than to hear Pokhom declare that, if only he had enough land, he would defy the Devil himself.

"So be it, my fine fellow," he chuckled to himself. "You and I must thresh this out together. I will give you plenty of land, and that is precisely how I will get at you."

Pokhom's wish was soon gratified. First, by dint of much scraping and pinching, he was able to buy a respectable slice of an adjoining property. Increased responsibilities brought new troubles, but, on the whole, he was fairly satisfied.

Then, one day, he put a peasant up for the night, and his visitor told him about some wonderful land near the Volga; not only did it produce enormous crops almost without being scratched, but it was stupendously cheap. Pokhom was electrified. He forthwith sold his present little holding and set out for the land of promise.

The place proved all that he had been led to expect. But here, too, fresh troubles arose. The chief grievance was the insufficiency of suitable land for corn, and Pokhom was compelled to rent some more. However, his industry and a succession of good harvests enabled him, five years later, to put by a little money.

He was just on the point of purchasing from a ruined neighbour the very land he needed to round off his property when

something intervened. A passing stranger, a merchant, happened to tell him about the wonderful country of the Bashkirs, where, for a thousand roubles—the exact sum Pokhom had at his disposal—he, the merchant, had acquired five thousand acres of magnificent land.

"All you need do," he assured Pokhom, "is to make friends with the elders. I presented them with a few dressing-gowns and carpets and a chest of tea and gave them a drink of wine all round. The land cost me less than sixpence an acre."

He produced the deed of sale of the land, which, he said, was a plain covered with grass and traversed by a river.

"There is so much of this good land," continued the stranger, enthusiastically, "that you could not walk round it in a whole year. It all belongs to the Bashkirs, and they are as silly as a lot of sheep. If you liked, you could almost get the land from them for nothing."

Once more Pokhom's imagination took fire. He decided to keep his money in his pocket. Heaven only knows how much land he might be able to extort from the Bashkirs for the sum he was going to hand to his ruined neighbour, as a first instalment on a few hundred acres.

He ascertained full particulars as to the best way of reaching the Bashkirs' country, and immediately got ready for the journey. The care of his house he entrusted to his wife, and, taking only one companion, he set out for the neighbouring town. There he purchased the articles mentioned by the stranger —several dressing-gowns and carpets, a chest of tea, and some wine. After that, the two men started on their journey in the cart.

They travelled on and on, and at the end of a week, after covering over three hundred miles, they came to a Bashkir camp.

Everything here was precisely as the stranger had described. The Bashkirs occupied a group of felt tents in a plain, on the banks of a small river. They are a race of nomads who never plough nor eat bread. Their whole existence is spent in wandering over the steppes with their horses and cattle. To drink koumiss and tea, eat mutton and play on his pipe, that is all a Bashkir has ever been known to do. Though densely ignorant and unable to speak a word of Russian, they are extremely hospitable.

No sooner had they noticed Pokhom's approach than all the Bashkirs left their tents and surrounded the new-comers. An interpreter was fortunately at hand, and Pokhom was able to make himself understood. He explained that the object of his visit was to obtain some land.

The Bashkirs gave him a most cordial welcome and conducted him to the best tent, where he was made to sit on a pile of soft cushions spread upon silk carpets. He was offered tea and koumiss. A sheep was killed in his honour, and all the tit-bits were put aside for him.

Pokhom bade his servant fetch the presents from the cart and he gave them to his hosts, distributing tea and wine to each of them.

The Bashkirs seemed highly pleased and they held a long consultation, at the end of which they told the interpreter to translate their decisions to Pokhom.

"I am to tell you," began the interpreter, "that they feel very friendly disposed towards you. It is our custom to treat strangers to the best of our ability and to return presents for presents. You have only to declare what pleases you most here and to take it in return for your gifts."

"What pleases me more than anything else," replied Pokhom, "is your land. There is not sufficient land in my country; moreover, the little land we do possess does not yield us a big enough return. You, on the other hand, have a lot of it, and it is very good land. I have never seen any land to compare with it."

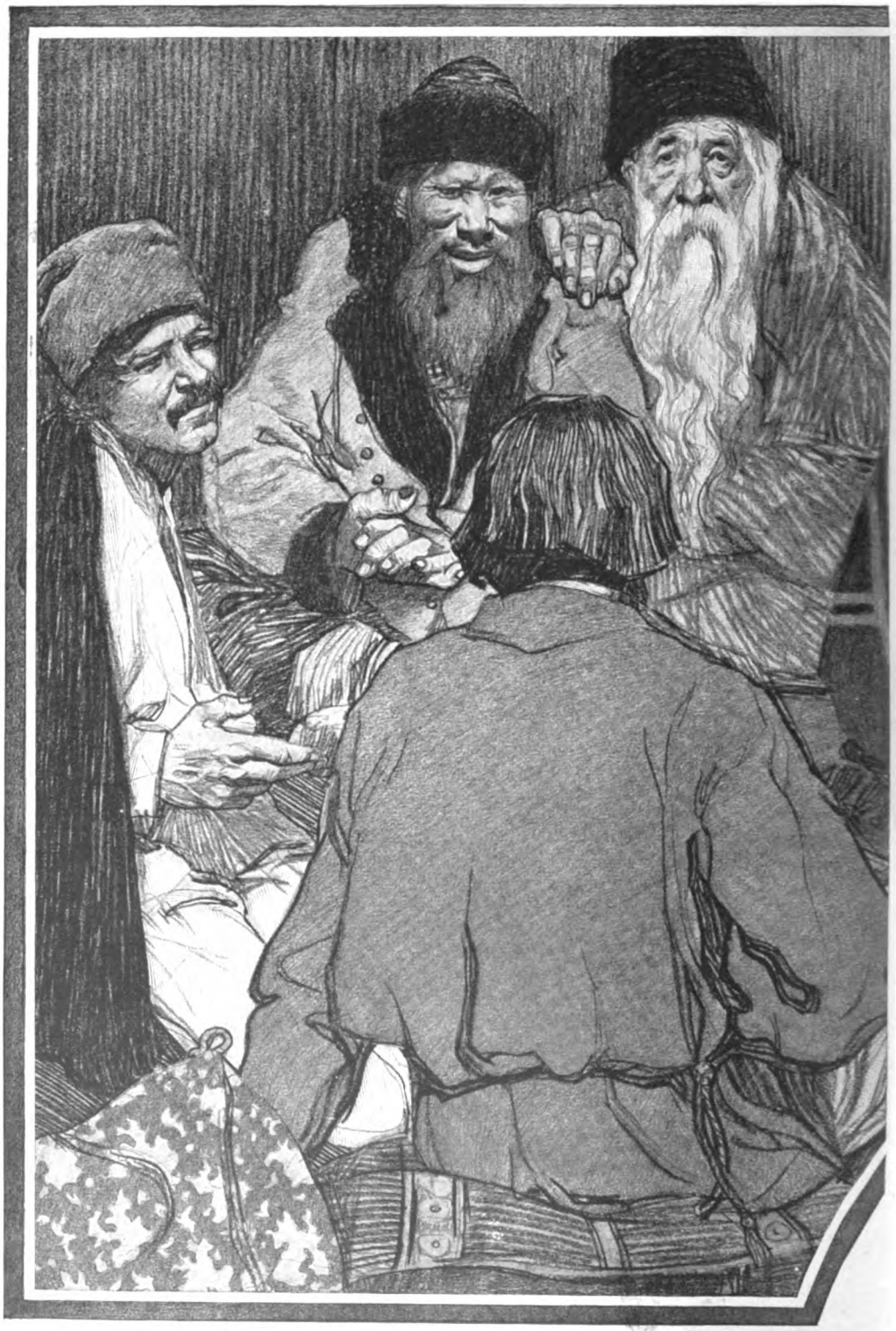
The interpreter duly translated this. Again the Bashkirs deliberated. Pokhom could not understand a word they said, but he gathered that they were very much amused, for they spoke and laughed boisterously.

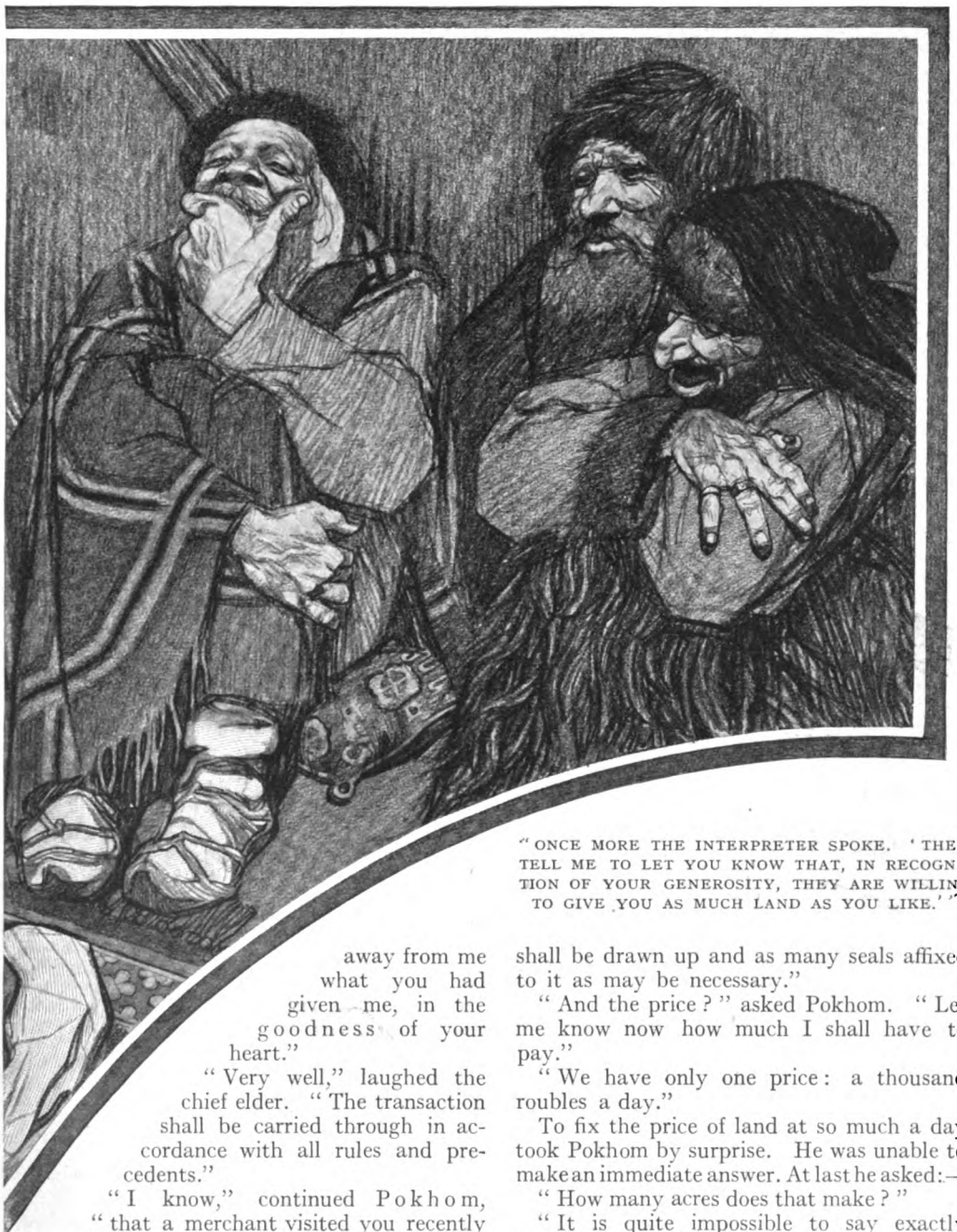
Finally they grew silent, and once more the interpreter spoke.

"They tell me to let you know that, in recognition of your generosity, they are willing to give you as much land as you like."

"What does he mean by saying I can have as much land as I like?" pondered Pokhom. "I want the transaction to be done properly. Otherwise, after I have been granted this or that land, somebody may come along and take it away from me again."

"I am very much obliged to you for your offer, your most generous offer," he said, aloud, turning to the elder. "You own a great deal of land, I know, but I do not ask you to give me very much. I do, however, want to know exactly what you propose to give me. I want to have the boundaries pegged out and everything put on a proper business footing, for we are all, every one of us, mortal. Were things not arranged as I suggest, your children might want to take





"ONCE MORE THE INTERPRETER SPOKE. 'THEY TELL ME TO LET YOU KNOW THAT, IN RECOGNITION OF YOUR GENEROSITY, THEY ARE WILLING TO GIVE YOU AS MUCH LAND AS YOU LIKE.'"

away from me what you had given me, in the goodness of your heart."

"Very well," laughed the chief elder. "The transaction shall be carried through in accordance with all rules and precedents."

"I know," continued Pokhom, "that a merchant visited you recently and that you ceded to him a certain amount of land. On that occasion a proper contract was drawn up. Do as much for me."

The chief elder understood perfectly well what Pokhom wanted.

"There need be no difficulty about that. We have an excellent scribe here. We can go all together to the nearest town. A deed shall be drawn up and as many seals affixed to it as may be necessary."

"And the price?" asked Pokhom. "Let me know now how much I shall have to pay."

"We have only one price: a thousand roubles a day."

To fix the price of land at so much a day took Pokhom by surprise. He was unable to make an immediate answer. At last he asked:—

"How many acres does that make?"

"It is quite impossible to say exactly beforehand. All the land you can walk round in a day will become your property. And the price for the day is a thousand roubles."

In his bewilderment Pokhom could only retort:—

"You can walk round a lot of land in a day."

"No matter how much it is, it will all be yours, on one condition: by the end of the day, you must be back at the place you started from. Otherwise, your money will be forfeited."

"Who will stake out the boundary as I pass along?" Pokhom asked.

"You yourself may select the places where you would like boundary stakes to be fixed. Some of our younger men shall accompany you on horseback, and, whenever you tell them to put in a stake, it shall be done. After that, all the stakes will be joined up by a furrow made with a plough. You are free to allot to yourself just as much land as ever you like, provided, as I have already said, that you return to your starting-point before sunset."

This seemed a very satisfactory arrangement to Pokhom. It was settled that he would start at dawn on the following day.

He drank tea and koumiss with his hosts and ate their mutton, after which he was given a feather bed, and everybody retired to rest.

Pokhom lay down on the feather bed, but he could not get the thought of the land out of his head. It kept him wide awake.

"I have not done so badly," was his constant mental refrain. "I mean to carve out a regular little kingdom for myself. At this season a day is almost as long as a year. I can easily cover more than thirty miles. Thirty miles! At last I shall be my own master—I shall no longer be dependent on anyone. I can buy oxen for two ploughs, hire a couple of labourers, cultivate the best part of the land, and let the cattle graze on the rest."

Thus, restless and wakeful, Pokhom passed the entire night. Only shortly before dawn did he fall into a fitful slumber. And then he had a dream!

In his dream he was still in the same tent. Shouts of laughter reached him from outside. Curious to see what was happening, he jumped up and went out. In front of the tent sat the chief elder, his hands crossed on his stomach. He was shaking with laughter.

"What is amusing you so much?" Pokhom asked, advancing towards him.

Suddenly Pokhom realized that the man before him was not the chief elder of the Bashkirs, but the merchant who had told him of the wonderful land in the steppes. He was on the point of asking him for the latest news, when he discovered that he had made another mistake. This man was not the merchant at all, but the peasant whom he once put up for the night and who had told him about the good land to be had near the Volga. But no sooner did he recognize him than the peasant, in turn, disappeared, and in his place, right in front of Pokhom's eyes, sat the Devil himself, with cloven hoofs and horns on the forehead. Staring very hard at something, he laughed as though his sides were going to split.

"What can he be looking at so fixedly?" wondered Pokhom; "and why is he so amused?"

Drawing still nearer, Pokhom suddenly started, then remained motionless. *What is this?* On the ground, quite close to him, a man was lying. He had nothing on except a shirt and a pair of trousers, and his feet were bare. He was stretched out on his back, face upwards, and his face was as white as chalk.

Pokhom gazed at the figure attentively and—recognized himself. With a cry of dismay he awakened.

"What extraordinary things one does dream!" he exclaimed half aloud, and was on the point of going to sleep again, when he noticed the first streaks of dawn. "Time the others were up," he muttered; "they ought to be setting out already."

Pokhom got up and went to arouse his servant. He told him to harness the horses and call the Bashkirs.

Hardly any time elapsed before the Bashkirs were assembled, the chief elder among them. They pressed Pokhom to take koumiss and tea, but he was far too impatient to start.

"It is high time we were off," he said. "Let us get away at once."

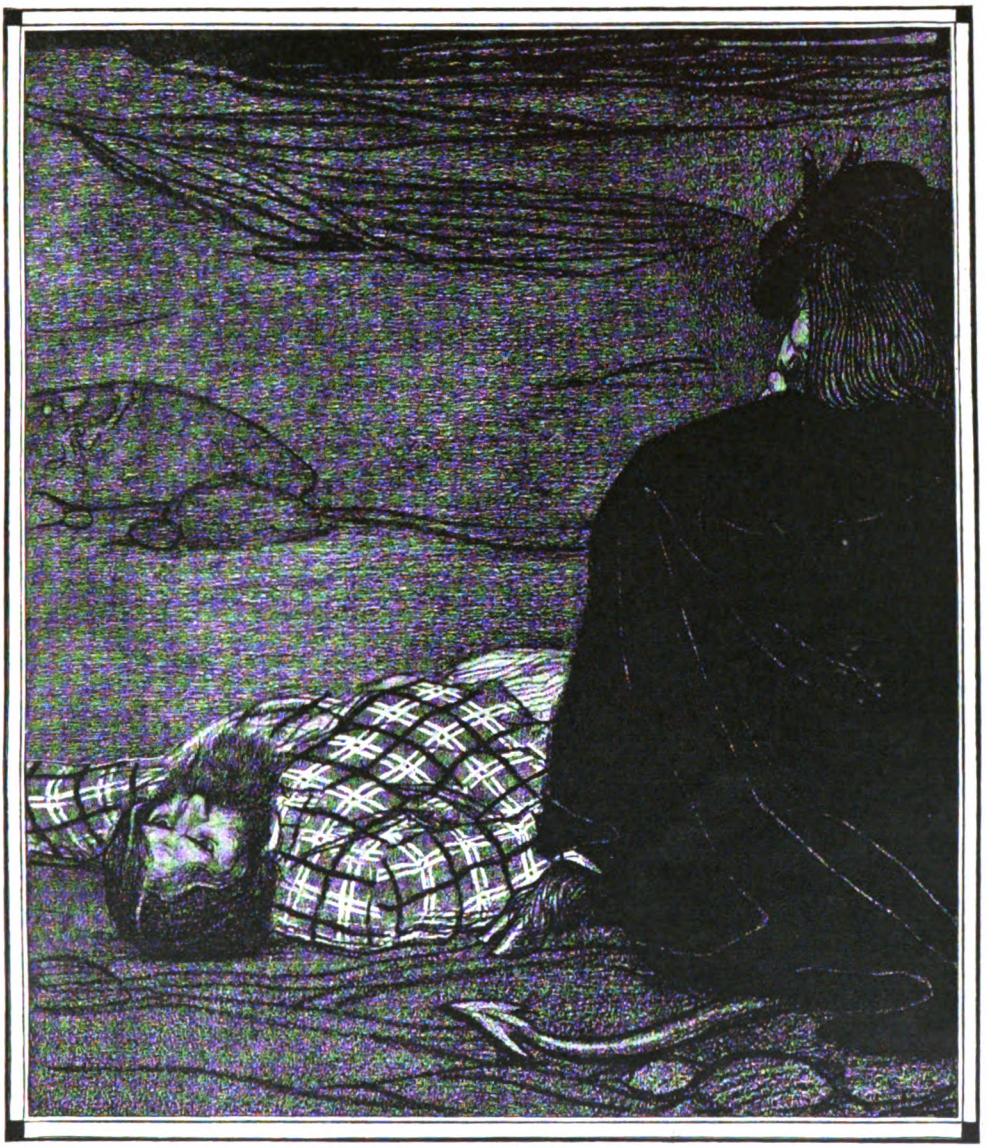
The little procession started; some of the Bashkirs rode, others drove in carts. Pokhom, of course, was in his own cart with his man. The steppes were soon reached.

Just before the sun peeped above the horizon they halted on the summit of a small hillock. The Bashkirs dismounted. Approaching Pokhom, the chief elder stretched out his arm and, with extended forefinger, pointed to the wide-spreading plains before them.

"All that belongs to us," he said. "Everything your eye can take in. Make your choice."

In Pokhom's eyes there was a sudden gleam. Right away to the distant horizon the land extended, luxuriant with grass, flat as the palm of his hand, dark as poppy-seed. Herbage of every description, some of it as high as a man, indicated the hollows.

The chief elder took off his fur cap and placed it on the ground, on the very summit of the hill.



"THE PEASANT, IN TURN, DISAPPEARED, AND IN HIS PLACE SAT THE DEVIL HIMSELF, WITH CLOVEN HOOFS AND HORNS ON THE FOREHEAD."

"Here," he said, "is the mark. Your servant shall remain beside it. Put your money in the hat. From here you must start and here you must return. All the land included in the circuit you will make becomes your property."

Pokhom took the thousand roubles from his pocket and placed the money in the cap. Then he removed his outer cloak, retaining his caftan, and tightened his waistband. He had provided himself with a little dried grain contained in a small bag, and a gourd full of water was slung over his shoulders. When he had given his boots a final hitch he was quite ready to start.

A minute or two he stood lost in reflection. Which direction ought he to take? The land looked equally good everywhere. Finally he decided to go east, as there was no obvious reason for him to take to the right rather than to the left.

He looked at the emblazoned sky, stretched his limbs, and waited for the sun to rise.

"I must not lose any time," he reflected.

"Walking is less trying during the cool hours of the morning. I must take every advantage I can."

Some of the younger Bashkirs were astride their horses again, ready to accompany Pokhom.

Simultaneously, as the edge of the sun appeared above the horizon, Pokhom started. He was soon in the very heart of the steppes, the horsemen following him.

He decided to maintain an even pace, neither too quick nor too slow. At the end of the first mile a stake was put in. Then on again. As his legs grew accustomed to the exercise he somewhat increased his pace.

He kept on steadily, walking, walking, walking. After what he estimated to be another mile he ordered another stake to be fixed. He glanced behind him. The hill, lit up by the full glow of the rising sun, stood out clearly. The little group of Bashkirs on the summit was plainly distinguishable.

By the time Pokhom had covered about three miles he decided to remove his caftan. The day promised to be warm; already the heat was trying. He gave his waistband another hitch and walked on for another three miles.

The heat was now growing oppressive. Pokhom raised his eyes to the sun and realized it was time he broke his fast.

"Here I am," he mused, "at the end of the first quarter of my day. There are four such parts in a day. It is not yet time to turn. I think, though, it will be better if I remove my boots."

He sat down, took off his boots, and once more resumed his march.

"Another three miles or so and I will then turn to the left. The land about here is far too good to be left out. The farther I go, in fact, the better the land seems to become."

And so Pokhom kept straight ahead. After a time he felt again the impulse to glance behind him. This time the hill was barely visible. As for the Bashkirs on the top of it, they resembled a group of ants rather than men.

"Ah," sighed Pokhom, "I have got something like a bit of land now! But I must really decide to turn."

Sweat was pouring down his face, and he felt very thirsty. Still walking, he took a long draught out of his gourd. Then he told the Bashkirs to fix another stake and turned sharply to the left.

On went Pokhom in the new direction,

"PUTTING FORTH ALL HIS STRENGTH, HE MADE A FINAL EFFORT."

The grass was high and thick, and the heat intense. Pokhom was beginning to feel very tired. He glanced upward at the sun. It was time he had dinner. A short rest would do him good. He stopped, opened his bag, and ate, standing.

"If I were to sit down," he reflected, "I should be tempted to stretch myself out at full length, and I am so weary that I should certainly fall asleep."

And so he remained standing where he was for a few minutes. Then, drawing a deep breath, he was off again.

The food had invigorated him, and, at first, he went ahead with comparative ease. But the heat had become well-nigh unbearable, and his desire to sleep was almost invincible. Pokhom was really tired out. To gain courage he muttered to himself the proverb: "An hour's suffering for a century of joy."

He managed to cover another four miles. Then, as he was on the point of turning once more to the left, he was struck by the wonderfully luxuriant look of the hollow straight ahead.

"It will never do to leave that out of my domain. What a crop of flax I shall have there!"

He continued to advance. He must have that hollow at all costs.

A stake was fixed on the other side of it, and then Pokhom turned.

Once more he looked towards the hill. The little group of Bashkirs could now be discerned only with difficulty. Ten miles, at least, separated Pokhom from them.

"I have made the first two sides rather long," he said; "this side must be shorter."

His pace, in spite of his weariness, was now considerably increased. The sun was nearing the horizon; very soon, now, it would reach the end of its day's journey. Yet Pokhom had covered little more than a mile of the third side. He was still a good ten miles away from his goal.

"There is no help for it," he sighed. "I must make straight for the hill now. My land will be a very queer shape, but that cannot be helped. I shall have quite sufficient."

He set his face towards the goal.

Straight for the hill went Pokhom. His distress was great. His feet, swollen and bruised, were horribly painful, and his limbs gave way under him. Much as he would have enjoyed a rest, the briefest halt was now quite out of the question. "What will become of me if I do not reach the goal before the appointed time? How far have I still to go? If only my feet did not ache so! Is it possible I am going to lose both my money and my toil?"

One more effort, Pokhom! Attempt to achieve the impossible!

And now, Pokhom began to run. His feet were bleeding, but that did not stay him. On, on, he raced! And still the goal lay far ahead. He removed the gourd, threw away cap and boots.

"Alas!" he lamented, "greed has been my undoing. Never, never can I reach the goal before the sun goes down."

The dread of this almost suffocated him. He was unable to take a deep breath. Still he continued to run. His mouth was parched, his shirt and trousers, soaked with sweat, were clinging to him. His chest rose and fell like a blacksmith's bellows, his heart was pounding hard. No longer could he feel his feet. His ankles were giving way. He was done for!

The land and everything else was forgotten. His sole dread now was that he might drop down dead from sheer exhaustion.

And Pokhom was very frightened of death.

As he raced along, Pokhom was saying to himself: "Think what a hopeless fool you will appear if you stop running now!"

He could actually hear the Bashkirs whistling and shouting, and this made him still more determined not to give in.

Putting forth all his strength, he made a final effort. The goal was quite near, but the sun was getting lower and lower.

Each man could be discerned now on the top of the hill. Everybody was making signs to him to hurry. He could even see the cap on the ground containing the money. The chief elder was squatting beside it, his hands folded over his stomach. And, quite suddenly, Pokhom recollected his dream.

"I shall have all the land I want, that is clear," he mused, "but will Heaven allow me to live on it? It is I alone who have been the cause of my undoing."

And still he continued to run. He raised his eyes to the sun. The great red disc was almost touching the earth. Now it had actually touched it. Another brief moment and the bottom half of it was hidden. Then, just as Pokhom, running all the time, reached the hill, the last glowing crescent slipped out of sight.

With a cry of despair, Pokhom told himself that all was lost. No; there was still a last chance! He suddenly realized that, though the sun might be gone for him at the bottom of the hill, it must still be visible for those on the summit.

Putting forth all that he had left of vitality, he bounded up the slope.

There is the cap! Victory!

He lost his footing and slipped, but, as he fell, his outstretched hands touched the cap.

"Bravo! Bravo!" shouted the chief elder of the Bashkirs. "You have gained a fine estate."

Pokhom's servant rushed forward; he wanted to assist his master to rise, but he noticed a little stream of blood trickling from his mouth.

Pokhom was dead!

The chief elder, squatting on the ground, his hands crossed on his stomach, burst out laughing. Then, rising, he took a spade and threw it towards Pokhom's servant.

"Take this and dig a grave for him."

The Bashkirs mounted their horses and rode away, leaving the servant with his master's body.

And the servant, all by himself, dug a hole six feet deep, the exact length of the body, and in that hole he buried Pokhom.

The Best War Story I Have Heard.

In a recent number we invited our readers to send us what they considered the best war story that had come within their knowledge. As might have been expected, we have been inundated with stories—both grave and gay—of which the following are a first selection.

A MAN presented himself at the recruiting station. The sergeant eyed him with approval.

"Married?" he inquired.

"Yes, sir."

"Any children?"

"Yes, sir."

"How many?"

"Twelve."

"Great Scot! Clear out of this. We can get a general for what you would cost us."

Clifford J. R. Cameron, 1, Woodriffe Road, Leytonstone, N.E.

TWO Germans residing in this country desired to become naturalized. They discovered that between them they had only sufficient funds to pay the necessary fees for one to take out naturalization papers. They thereupon pooled their funds and tossed for which of the two should become naturalized. The winner carried the business through, and on coming from the office was greeted by his late co-patriot with:—

"Well, Karl, how did you get on?"

Reply: "Don't speak to me, you dirty German!"

W. J. Foster, 3, Gladstone Road, Buckhurst Hill.

A YOUNG fellow, anxious to enlist, had just been examined by the doctor.

"I am sorry," said the doctor, "but your teeth are not good enough."

"What!" exclaimed the indignant recruit; "my teeth ain't good enough, ain't they? Well, they're the same teeth what you passed my brother with yesterday."

Andrew G. S. Clark, Tidmarsh Rectory, Pangbourne, Berks.

I GOT the following from an officer in a Territorial battalion of the London Regiment:—

One of his men, who a year ago was an assistant in a grocer's shop, has proved himself a perfect demon with the bayonet, and with this weapon alone has accounted for nearly a score of Germans. But the habits of the counter still prevail, and every time he lets daylight into a Hun he says, politely: "Pay at the desk, please."

Headon Hill, Home Rest, Seaton, Devon.

AT the War Anniversary meeting held at Malmesbury, Wilts. Lieutenant Harold E. Gorst (home wounded from the Front), speaking of the splendid spirit which animated the men in the firing line, said that one of his duties as an officer was to assist as censor, and he would never forget one of the soldiers' letters which passed through his hands; it ran:—

"DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER,—It is very nice out here. I am enjoying myself very much—it is hell upon earth."

Joseph West, Market Cross, Malmesbury, Wilts.

ONE afternoon in the trenches an Irish soldier discovered that the man on his right was wearing a beautiful pair of boots.

"How did you manage to get hold of them?" he asked, enviously. "A present from an officer, I suppose?"

The Englishman smiled.

"I stole out of the trench last night," he answered, in a whisper, "and I found the boots on a German I killed."

The Irishman became thoughtful, and that night he disappeared.

Early next morning he staggered back into the trench carrying a pair of boots. Making for his friend he whispered bitterly to him:—

"I've had the hardest job of me life. Had to kill fifty Germans before I found a pair of boots to fit me."

C. Kingston, Glendalough, Elm Tree Avenue, Esher.

A LADY told me, as a true story of a soldier's wit, that a soldier in a hospital on recovering consciousness said:—

"Nurse, what is this on my head?"

"Vinegar cloths," she replied. "You have had fever."

After a pause:—

"And what is this on my chest?"

"A mustard plaster. You have had pneumonia."

"And what is this at my feet?"

"Salt bags; you have had frost-bite."

A soldier from the next bed looked up and said:—

"Hang a pepper-box to his nose, nurse, then he will be a cruet."

Mrs. Lory, 26, Eddystone Road, Brockley, S.E.

ONE of the methods of communicating from one officer to another in the trenches of the present great war is to give the message to one of the privates and tell him to "pass the word along" the line until it reaches its destination, viz., the officer at the other end. The following story will show how a serious message can be distorted on its journey from mouth to mouth :—

Lieutenant A., in charge of one end of the British line, told the private in front to "pass the word along" to Lieutenant B., "We are going to advance, can you send us reinforcements ?"

When Lieutenant B. received the message it was like this : "We are going to a dance, can you lend us three and fourpence ?"

J. Wells, junr., 61, Glenthorne Road, Hammersmith, W.

MEMBER of Bantam Battalion, entering confectioner's shop in North-country town, says to pretty girl behind counter :—

"Have you got a bantam ?"

"No," replies the fair one; "we don't keep poultry."

"Very well," answered the short-statured son of Mars, "I will call for you at 7.30 this evening and supply you with one."

Alfred Chapman, 29, Carlisle Terrace, Manningham, Bradford.

THE following true incident goes to show the spirit which animates the women of France in support of their gallant armies in the field :—

In a little northern town in France through which troops were passing a woman in deep mourning called on the mayor.

"Why have no soldiers been billeted on me ?" she asked.

The mayor rubbed his nose and blew it hard. He knew her son had been killed a few days before.

"I thought that in your sorrow, madame, they would remind you," he said at length.

"They would console me," she said.

When a young sergeant got to the house he found it lighted as if a festival was on. In his room were cut flowers. There was champagne at dinner.

The lady, in a pretty spring dress, waved good-bye from the doorway next day.

"No," she said to the mayor, "I did not tell him about my son. It would have been a mistake to talk about my loss to a soldier on his way to fight." And she went quietly indoors and put on her black mourning clothes again.

J. Scott, 35, Carlingford Road, Dublin.

THE following *true* instance of an example of Cockney wit is related by an officer :—

He was in a trench facing one held by Germans. The latter simply gave his men no rest, tormenting them in every possible way. The persecuted ones ached to go for their neighbours, and when the chance came they got a bit of their own back. During the skirmish the officer saw one of his men corner four Germans in a small yard. When calm had settled he asked what had happened in that particular spot.

"Well, sir, you see it was like this : They all threw up their hands, so I shot two and then I hadn't the heart to go on—I really hadn't, sir ; so I bayoneted the other two !"

Mrs. S. B. Pratt, Highbury, Wantage.

THE following incident took place in an hotel :—

Major R—— was at lunch one day along with some other officers, when a bronzed-looking private came up to him and inquired if he was Captain R—— who had served in the Boer War. The major replied that was so.

"Well," said the private, "I wish to thank you for once saving my life whilst serving under you. We were faced by superior enemy forces and it was sure death if we remained in our position. But, thanks to you, we came out safe. You gave the order, 'Run, d—— you ; run, for your lives.'"

J. B. Cowan, 5, Carlton Road, Burnley.

FREQUENTLY during the fight in Flanders the trenches have been near enough for Britons and Germans to exchange remarks, if not compliments. On one of these occasions Tommy made appeal to the enemy thus :—

"Now, then, you over there, listen 'ere ! We just want to give you a tip. You've got to play the game to-morrow and act square. We're expecting His Majesty King George and Lord Kitchener to visit these 'ere trenches, and so you've got to be'ave like gentlemen and stop shootin'. Now you know—and we shall look to you to play up proper."

Sure enough, the following morning the enemy on the look-out beheld two silk hats, just visible, progressing slowly along the British trench. Volley upon volley greeted their appearance.

When the firing ceased Tommy once more engaged the enemy's attention.

"Well, you *are* a lot o' bloomin' blighters ! Wot do you suppose you've been and done ? Why, you've potted Lord 'Aldane and Bernard Shaw—blest if you 'aven't."

Mrs. J. O. Arnold, Beech Hill Road, Sheffield.

A COMPANY of infantry in training were engaged in a route march along rough country roads under a broiling sun with little or no shelter by the hedgerows. The men swung bravely but uncomfortably along to the accompaniment of marching songs and hymns, but all secretly hoping that the diminutive and youthful-looking captain in front would call an early halt.

The captain, however, showed no signs of responding to their hopes, and some wit in a spirit of revenge struck up with the hymn, "A little child shall lead them," in which his comrades lustily joined, but the captain marched quietly on.

When the company paraded the following morning the little captain, congratulating his men on their performance of the day previous, said :—

"Well, boys, we did nineteen miles yesterday in fine style ; to-day we shall march twenty-eight miles, and the same little child will lead you, but this time *on horseback !*"

Harold Garlick, Glyn Garth, Sheffield Rd., Hyde, Cheshire.

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

269.—THE HANDCUFFED PRISONERS.

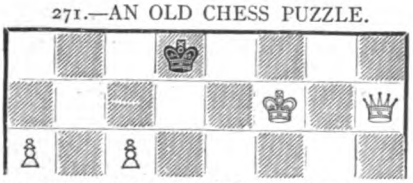
THE Russians had nine Turkish prisoners of a particularly dangerous character, who had to be carefully watched. Every weekday they were taken out for exercise, handcuffed together as shown in the sketch made

by one of their guards. On no day in any one week were the same two men to be handcuffed together. It will be seen how they were sent out on Monday. Can you arrange the nine men in triplets for the remaining five days? It will be seen that No. 1 cannot again be handcuffed to No. 2 (on either side) nor No. 2 with No. 3, but, of course, No. 1 and No. 3 can be put together. Therefore, it is quite a different problem from the old one of the Schoolgirls, and it will be found to be a fascinating "teaser," and amply repay for the leisure time spent on its solution.

270.—A NEW MATCH PUZZLE.

A CHILD was playing with ten matches on the table, and, having a taste for puzzles, arranged them together, and said to me, "See! That is how you can make three squares of the same size with ten matches." Though it was not very profound, I naturally expressed my interest in the discovery. Then I used one of the matches to light a cigarette, and replied, "Now make three squares of the same size with the nine." Of course, there must be no loose ends of matches. The child did not succeed. How long would the reader have taken to discover the solution?

271.—AN OLD CHESS PUZZLE.



HERE is an old chess puzzle by N. Marache. White has to play and checkmate with one of the pawns in five moves. I will just say that every move of the Black king is forced, so there are no variations. Part of the chess-board is omitted merely to save space.

272.—ROOT EXTRACTION.

IN a conversation I had with Professor Simon Greathead, the eminent mathematician, now living in retirement at Colney Hatch, I had occasion to refer to the extraction of the cube root. "Ah," said the professor, "it is astounding what ignorance prevails on that elementary matter! The world seems to have made little advance in the process of the extraction of roots since the primitive method of employing spades, forks, and trowels for the purpose. For example, nobody but myself has ever discovered the simple fact that, to extract the cube root of a number, all you have to do is to add together the digits. Thus, ignoring the obvious case of the number 1, if we want the cube root of 512, add the digits—8, and there you are!" I suggested that that was a special case. "Not at all," he replied. "Take another number at random—4913—and the digits add to 17, the cube of which is 4913." I did not presume to argue the point with the learned man, but I will just ask the reader to discover all the other numbers whose cube root is the same as the sum of their digits. They are so few that they can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

273.—A CHARADE.

MY *first*, for a gift baby utters this sound.
My *second's* a weight, and exactly a pound.
My *third*, to reverse, there 'twill quickly be found.
My *whole* is heraldic, resembling a hound.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

265.—TURKS AND GERMANS.

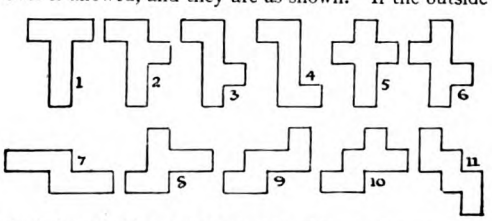
THE smallest number that will count out the four Turks is 228, if we must start at No. 3. This applies also, of course, to a start at No. 7. If we start at No. 1 or 5, the lowest number is 18; starting at 2 or 6, the number is 21; starting at 4 or 8, the number is 123. There is no need to do any laborious counting. The remainders of 228, when divided by 8, 7, 6, and 5, are successively 4, 4, 0, and 3. Therefore, you need only count out first the *fourth* man, again the *fourth*, next the *sixth* (or simply go back *one*), and finally the *third*.

266.—THE DIGITAL CENTURY.

$123 - 45 - 67 + 89 = 100.$

267.—THE CARDBOARD BOX.

THERE are eleven different shapes in all, if turning over is allowed, and they are as shown. If the outside



of the box is blue and the inside white, and every possible shape has to be laid out with white uppermost, then there are twenty different ways, for all except Nos. 1 and 5 can be reversed to be different.

268.—MISSING WORDS.

GERMAN—RAGMEN—MANGER.

Stupider and Stupider.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

From the Slavonic.

Illustrated by W. Heath Robinson.

AS he went off to the fields one morning, a labourer reminded his wife that she must not forget to send his dinner to him at midday. The wife, having prepared the meal, in due course told her daughter to carry it to her father. The lass set out along the road. She covered half the distance, and then stopped at the edge of a big field, where she sat down to rest in the shade of a tree, and began to lose herself in day-dreams.

"Without doubt," she said to herself, "I shall marry before long, and perhaps I shall have a son. I shall call him 'John.' But supposing he should die——"

Without more ado she burst into tears. "Alas, my dear, sweet little John!"

Her tears fell faster and faster, and her grief was so intense that she did not notice how the time went by.

As she did not return, the mother presently went in search of her daughter, and found her crying at the foot of a tree. The young girl explained the reason of her grief.

"It makes me weep to think," she said, "that I may have a son, and may lose him."

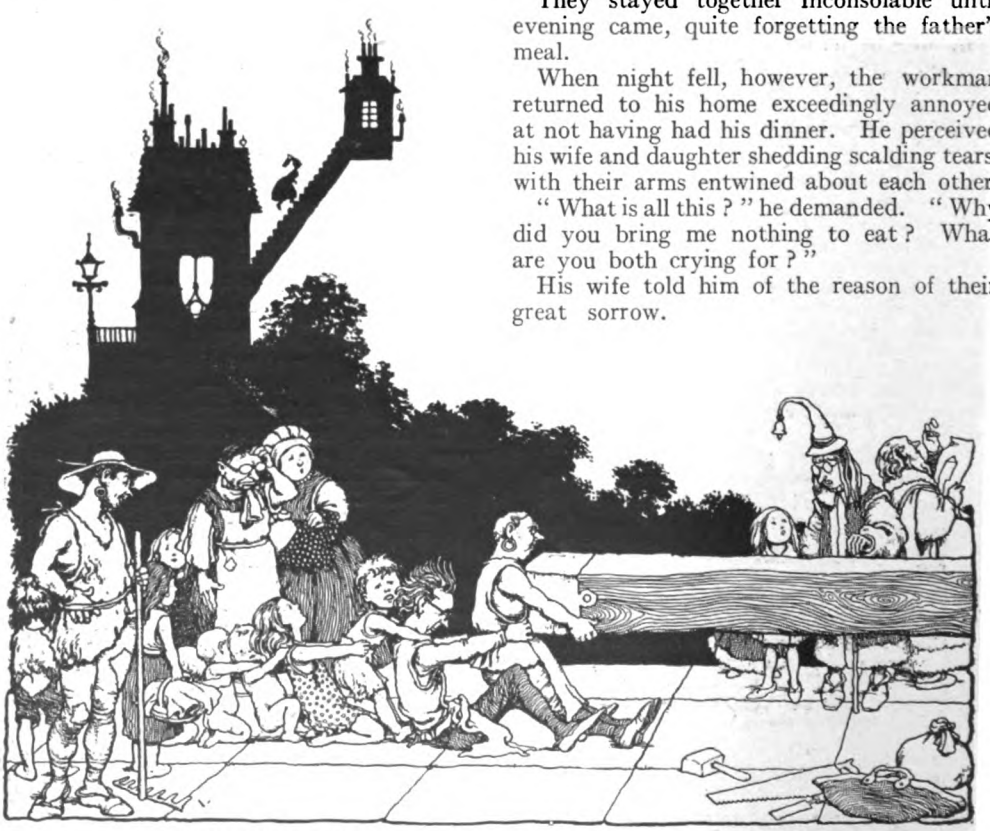
At these words the woman, too, burst into sobs. "Poor grandmother," she cried, "poor mother, poor little child! What a sad fate!"

They stayed together inconsolable until evening came, quite forgetting the father's meal.

When night fell, however, the workman returned to his home exceedingly annoyed at not having had his dinner. He perceived his wife and daughter shedding scalding tears, with their arms entwined about each other.

"What is all this?" he demanded. "Why did you bring me nothing to eat? What are you both crying for?"

His wife told him of the reason of their great sorrow.



"AS ONE OF THE BEAMS HAD PROVED TOO SHORT, SEVERAL OF THEM WERE

"Oh, what idiots!" he cried, angrily. "There cannot be in all the world two such geese as you!" And he went on his way, turning his steps towards a neighbouring village.

In this place there were some people building a house, and as one of the beams had proved too short several of them were tugging at each end with all their strength, in order to make it longer. As will readily be imagined, their efforts were useless.

"What are you doing there?" asked the workman, very much interested.

They explained matters to him.

"What will you give me if I show you how to lengthen the beam?"

"Anything you will, but we do not think your efforts will succeed any better than our own."

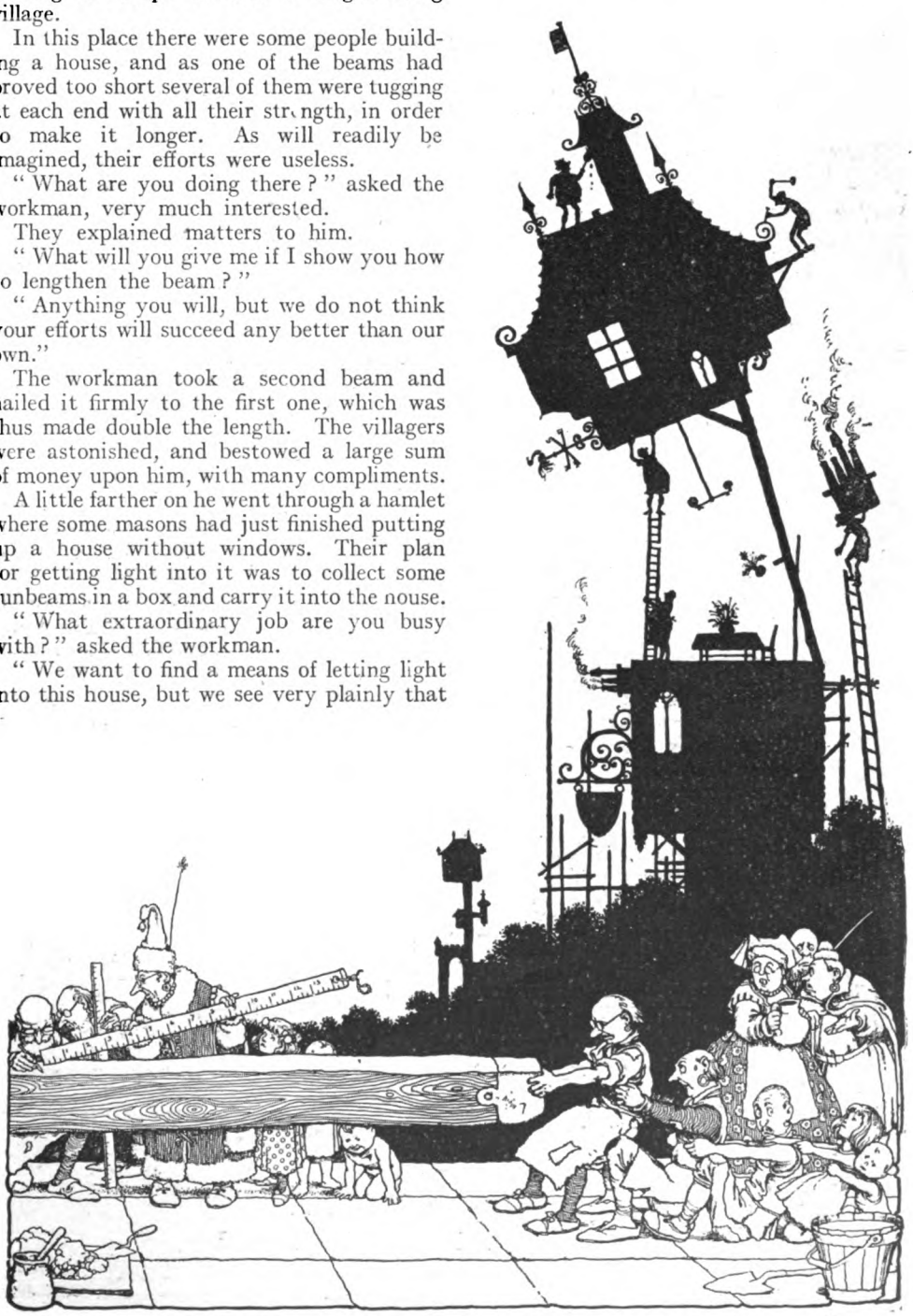
The workman took a second beam and nailed it firmly to the first one, which was thus made double the length. The villagers were astonished, and bestowed a large sum of money upon him, with many compliments.

A little farther on he went through a hamlet where some masons had just finished putting up a house without windows. Their plan for getting light into it was to collect some sunbeams in a box and carry it into the nouse.

"What extraordinary job are you busy with?" asked the workman.

"We want to find a means of letting light into this house, but we see very plainly that the thing is impossible, and that we must give it up."

The workman had no difficulty in cutting



TUGGING AT EACH END WITH ALL THEIR STRENGTH, IN ORDER TO MAKE IT LONGER."

a window in the wall, and the sunlight instantly shone in. The masons were loud in their admiration, and begged him to accept several gold coins.

In a third village he saw a man who was puzzled to know how to put on a pair of trousers which he had just bought. The fellow had just climbed a tree and was getting ready to jump into the legs of the trousers. The workman showed him the ordinary way of putting on a pair of trousers, and again received a handsome present for his advice.

Farther on he found an old woman who had gone into her neighbour's house in order to ask for a handful of salt. She had found no difficulty in putting her hand into the mouth of the box, but when she had taken hold of the salt she could not withdraw it, owing to her fist being closed. Everybody in the village, including the doctor, was gathered round her, debating the case of this poor woman pinned by her arm. The workman went up to the old woman and struck her sharply with his stick upon the wrist. The pain made her let go the salt. She opened her fist and withdrew her hand without difficulty.

The astonished villagers were almost inclined to look upon this as a miracle. They made a collection and handed over the proceeds to the ingenious workman.

The latter went on his way, and in passing through the streets of a fourth village emerged upon a square, in the midst of which was a wedding procession. The bride, on returning from church, had found that she could not enter her husband's house, as the door was too low. The wedding guests were yelling like madmen, but not a soul thought of stooping in order to get under the doorway. The young woman, in despair, was preparing to return to her parents' home, when the workman gave her a kick. She fell to the ground, rolled into the house, and was delighted to find herself inside when she regained her feet. The young husband did not know how to thank the workman enough.

Still going on his way, the workman met

"THE FELLOW HAD JUST CLIMBED A TREE AND WAS

two young women who were washing linen, with a little sucking-pig running about near them. The whim came into his head to test once more the stupidity of the people of this neighbourhood.

"Good day," he said; "Heaven protect you."

"Thank you. The same to you."

"Do you know, my pretty maids, why I am here?"

"No. What do you want?"

"Why, the brother of this little pig is being married to-day, and I have come to fetch him, so that he may be a page of honour."

At once the two women were in a flutter, running about and getting very busy over the animal.

"Quick," said one, "get your satin kerchief for him."

"Here, buckle this belt upon him."

"Wait, here is my coral necklace and pretty silk petticoat with the green and pink stripes."

They chattered away without ceasing. You ought to have seen the commotion they made, while all the time the little pig grunted!

"Now, then," they cried, clapping their hands, "off you go, my pretty little page of honour."

The workman then took the sucking-pig away. Hardly had he left the village when he took the ornaments off, stuffed them in his pocket, and for fear lest later on the animal should be recognized as the one he had stolen, drove it away over the fields.

The two women presently went back to their homes and told their husbands the story of the little pig which had gone to be a page of honour.

The men at once got very angry and cried out, "Idiots that you are! Could you not see that the fellow was laughing at you, and has stolen the pig? Quick, let's be after the thief!"

One of them jumped quickly on his horse and pursued the workman, whom he presently overtook.

"Say, friend, have you happened to pass a peasant leading a sucking-pig on a string?"

"Why, yes, only a moment ago. He has just taken a path across these fields. If you want to catch him up, run after him quickly. I will look after your horse so that you can get along the path."

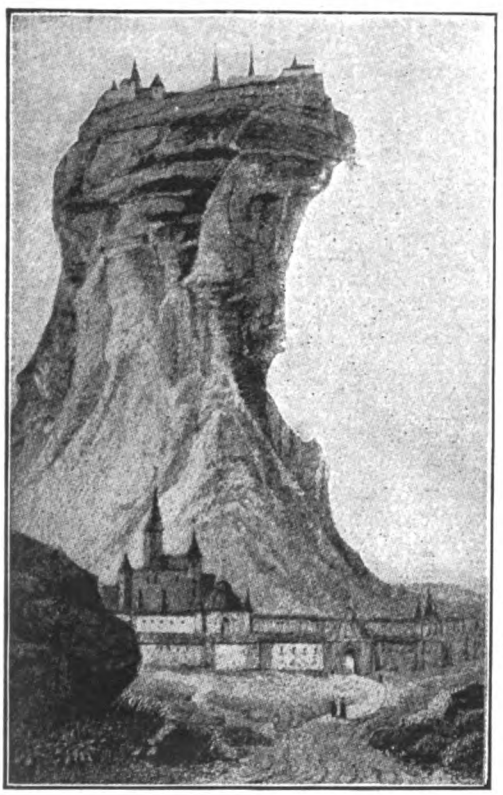
The man (not less stupid after all than his wife) got down from his horse and handed the bridle to the workman, who without more ado jumped upon the horse and returned to his house at a gallop.

"Well," said he, when he met his wife and daughter again, "I have found some people even more foolish than you, which is lucky for both, as otherwise I should have given the pair of you a first-rate drubbing!"

GETTING READY TO JUMP INTO THE LEGS OF THE TROUSERS."

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]



THE CASTLE OF SEMIRAMIS AT VAN.

THE Assyrians were full of quaint, fantastic conceits, especially in the matter of palace-building, and Semiramis was perhaps the most brilliant, as well as the most charming, of her marvellous race. It is not strange, therefore, that when she founded Van (a city now in the full turmoil of Russo-Turkish war) she should have produced something that deserves to rank among the marvels of the world. The astonishing mountain in our picture is entirely artificial, a work worthy of the Cyclops, on which the labour of thousands and thousands of slaves was expended during many years by her orders. At the top is a castle almost amounting to a town in itself, and within are mysterious passages, vast caverns, and huge halls that must once have presented visions of fairy splendour, resplendent with avenues of statues, splendid carvings, capitals, vases, inscriptions, bronzes—an enchanted castle worthy of ranking with the wonders of the "Arabian Nights."—Mr. Herbert Vivian, Consolato Britannico, Livorno, Italy.

"NO MORE UM KAISER."

I HAVE seen many curious examples in the pages of THE STRAND MAGAZINE of the distortion of the King's English by foreigners who have arrived at the adolescent stage, but I think the enclosed will bear comparison with any of them. It is a copy of the proclamation read to the natives of the late German possessions in the Pacific on their annexation by the Australasian Forces. It is noteworthy that the Germans, despite the most strenuous endeavours made during their occupation of these islands, were unable to coerce the natives into adopting their language. They speak a corruption of English which the reader will no doubt find some difficulty in translating. *Kai-Kai:* food; *making paper:* entering into an agreement; *picanin:* baby. *You no Kai-Kai man:* You are no cannibal—a reference to a section of natives occupying the interior.

PROCLAMATION.

READ TO THE NATIVES ON THE ANNEXATION OF THE LATE GERMAN POSSESSIONS IN THE PACIFIC.

September 12th, 1914.

ALL boys belongina one place, you savvy big Master he come now. He new feller Master, he strong feller too much. You look him all ship stop place, he small feller ship belongina him. Plenty more big feller he stop place belongina him. Now he come here he take him all place. He look out good your feller. Now he like your feller look out good alonga him. Supposing other feller Master he been speak you "you no work alonga new feller Master" he gammon. Supposing you work good with this new feller Master he look out good alonga you, he look out you get plenty good feller Kai-Kai. He no fighting black feller alonga nothing. You look him new feller Flag, you savvy him, he belonga British, he more better than other feller. Supposing you been making paper before this new feller come, you finish time belongina him first, finish time belongina him. You like make him new feller paper alonga man belongina new feller Master, he look out good alonga with you, he give good feller Kai-Kai. Supposing you no look out good alonga him, he cross to much. British new feller Master, he like him black feller man too much, he like you all same you picanin alonga him. You get black Master belongina you, he all same Police-Master you look out alonga with him, he look out place alonga with you. You no fight other feller black man other feller place. You no Kai-Kai man. You no steal Mary belongina other feller black man. He finish talk alonga with you soon, bye an bye ship belongina new feller Master he come and look out place alonga with you, you look out place him now belongina, place belongina you, you speak him all the same. He been talk with you now, now you give three good feller cheers belongina new feller Master.

God save um King.

No more um Kaiser.

Pte. George R. Jackson, c/o A. J. Boyd, *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, N.S.W.

TOMMY'S TASTE IN LITERATURE.

The following interesting letter has been received from a correspondent who is responsible for the distribution of books and magazines at one of our Military hospitals, but the service regulations do not permit us to give the writer's name or that of the hospital. However, we feel sure the appeal will not be made in vain.

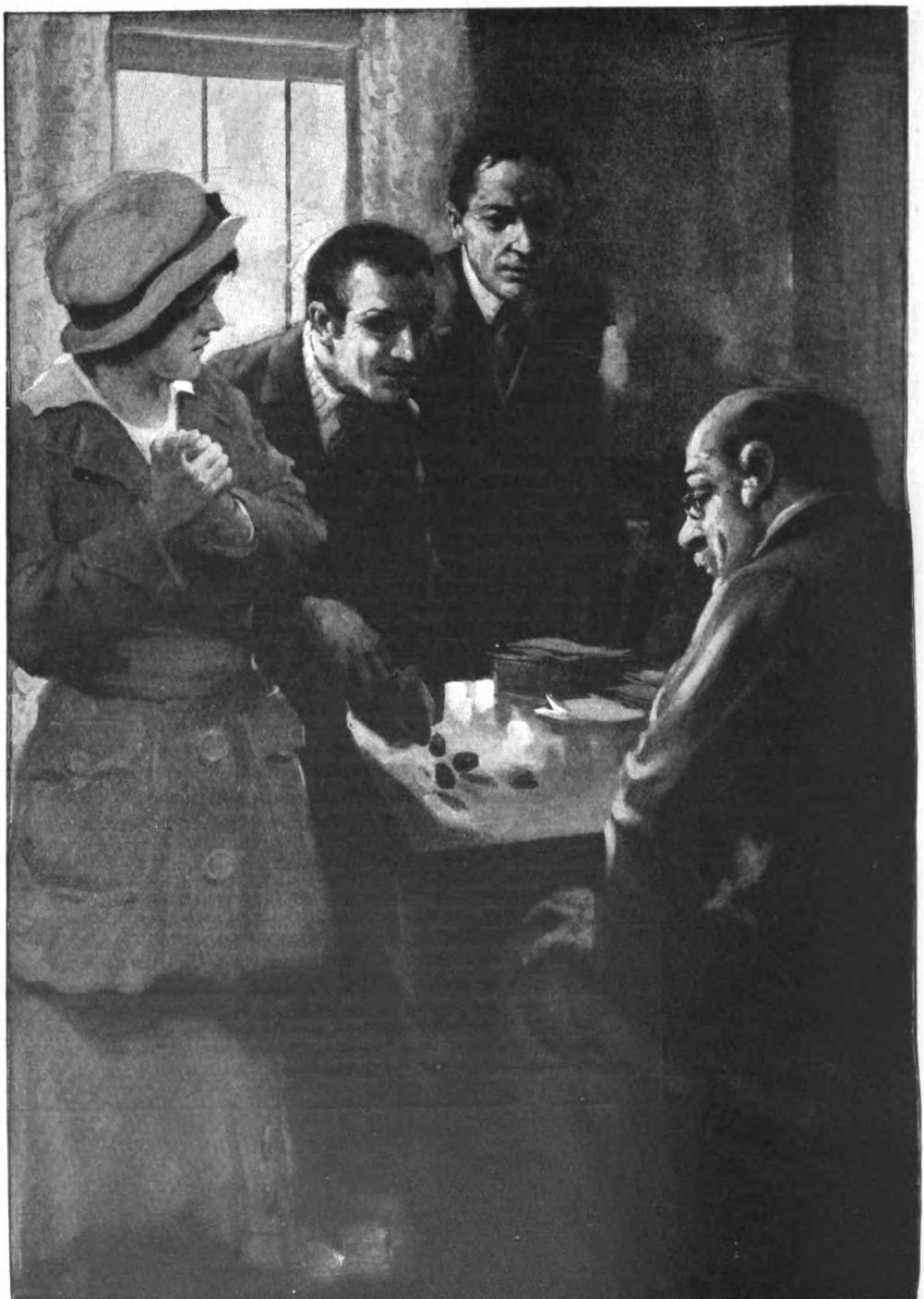
It will doubtless be a satisfaction to the Proprietors, Staff, and Readers of "The Strand" to know that Thomas Atkins, when wounded and in hospital, prefers that excellent publication to any other. At least, that has been my experience at a Military hospital, where I have the proud task of organizing the circulation of books and magazines.

When the hospital was opened, an appeal in the local papers caused the good people of the district to transfer all their books in paper bindings, and an innumerable multitude of magazines, to the hospital. This was a sound instinct, as paper books are much lighter and easier to hold, when you are weak and in bed, than those in cloth bindings. Our stock, therefore, consists chiefly of magazines of every sort and kind, novels in paper covers, and illustrated papers.

Ladies take round selections of these into the wards twice a week, and "The Strand" is first favourite and goes quickest. In fact, I have developed such a yearning for "Strands" that when I see one being read in a train or at a station I can hardly restrain myself from asking for the reversion of it when finished. Of novels, those by Charles Garvice, Nat Gould, Rider Haggard, and Conan Doyle are frequently asked for. As a rule, Tommy's nerves are too shaken, plucky as he is, for him to care for strong mental food; but one did say he wanted nothing but a book on engineering, and this we were able to supply from a private source. Books about war he doesn't want.

Occasionally, convalescent Tommies come to the room where we keep our stock of books and choose their own, or make a selection for a friend still in bed. A young and tender Tommy appeared one afternoon, and said he had come on behalf of a friend who wanted "a library." This sounded rather a tall order, particularly as Ward Sisters don't like too many books to be strewn about. However, inquiry revealed that by "a library" a book in cloth binding was signified; and an old, substantial edition of "The Channings" was pronounced just the thing.

The object of this note is to urge everyone who buys a "Strand" to pass it on, when read, to a Military hospital, and to send with it other magazines, novels, and up-to-date illustrated papers. For please note, Tommy, like everyone else, prefers his serial as soon after publication as possible.



"TEDDY PULLED HIMSLF TOGETHER, PUT A HAND ON HIS HIP POCKET, AND DREW OUT A LEATHER BAG. THE CONTENTS RATTLED OUT UPON THE TABLE BEFORE FOUR ASTONISHED EYES."

(*See page* 490.)

NEW YORK.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Vol. L NOVEMBER, 1915 No. 299.

The Rivals.

By AUSTIN PHILIPS.

Illustrated by Dudley Tennant.

"THEN you won't be coming in to-night, Teddy?"

"No, Bessie, I sha'n't be able; I've got to work. I must get down to the mine now. It's nearly four o'clock."

As he answered his *fiancée*, Teddy Sanders, clerk at the china clay works, turned resolutely away. George Vinall, the manager, gave a swift glance at Bessie, and did not hide his smile. Baragwanath, the engine-man, old servant of the company, and much privileged, emitted a cackle of a laugh.

"You do belong to be mighty hard-working, Mr. Sanders," he called. "Aye, and mighty curious, too."

"Curious!" The fair, short, trim, side-whiskered, jockey-like little clerk pulled up short in the doorway and faced the smiling old man. "Why curious, Baragwanath? What makes you think that?"

The old man grinned wide and knowingly at his manager and Bessie Grant.

"Mr. Sanders do a heap of huntin' on them dump-heaps, he do. Never passes the mine but I sees him a-poakin' and a rummagin' on they piles o' rubbage what they brings from underneath. Lookin' for goald, I says to myself. Young men as wants to go exploratin' should go to Ameriki, some quick, I says, and——"

"Oh, nonsense!" The little clerk gave a swift and meaning glance at Bessie. "You've been seeing pixies, Billy, and having dreams. Are you coming my way, Bessie?"

The girl hesitated. She glanced at the engine-man. The manager interposed.

"Miss Grant has promised to let me take her over the clay works," he said. "Isn't that so, Miss Grant?"

Before she answered, the farmer's daughter returned her *fiancé* that swift and meaning look. He interpreted it; he knew that it meant, "I must allay any possible suspicion that Billy Baragwanath may have started." He nodded and turned away. The old engine-man, unused to snubbing, began to re-tell his tale.

"I did seed him; I seed him agin and agin. Allus a-poakin' and a-roakin' in them heaps of rubbage what comes up out of the mine. Ought to go to Ameriki, I says, an'——"

He was snubbed a second time. For Bessie cut him short.

"We had better be starting, Mr. Vinall, hadn't we? Father won't be very pleased if I don't get home to tea."

"Why, certainly, Miss Bessie." The square, pugilistic-featured, coarse, yet strong-faced manager was all alacrity. "Such a pleasure rarely comes my way. Well, to begin with, this is the engine-house for pulling up the trolleys from the pits over there. Billy works this long handle here, and when the men have got a trolleyfull of sand or overburden—just rubbish, Miss Bessie—look, he's working it this minute—they send it up from below and—half a second—here it comes!"

As Vinall spoke a bell tinkled. Billy Baragwanath swung a long, thin lever thing; and two hundred yards from the engine-house a trolley appeared from nowhere and was grasped by waiting men. They rushed it along a rough railway; they reached the railway's end. They released a catch; they

tipped the trolley forward ; it emptied ; they ran it back to the edge of the precipice, Billy swung back his lever thing, and the trolley disappeared whence it had come. Vinall led the way out of the engine-house, crossed a wooden gangway, and entered a similar room. A large wheel was revolving, a huge piston-rod heaved upwards and sank down.

" That's the engine which pumps the shaft," said Vinall. " It brings up the liquid clay from the levels on the same elevation as the pit. I'll show it you all, if you'll come along to the edge."

Bessie nodded. They walked forward, two hundred yards or so, their boots squish-squishing in the wet, white, clayey soil. They reached the edge of the precipice up which they had but now beheld the laden trolleys come. On the far bank opposite them a great iron pipe was discharging water into the chasm, softening the soil for the diggers underneath. Men were working with pick and spade there, while the water incessantly ran. The water carried the clay with it ; it formed a stream ; the stream ran three hundred yards and more along the bottom of the chasm till it reached the foot of the shaft.

" I can see the clay stream in the chasm," said Bessie, presently. " And you showed me the piston-rod that forces it up the shaft. But where does it all go to when it gets to the top ? "

" I'll show you."

Vinall turned quickly in the direction from which they had come.

They reached the engine-house again ; they passed it ; they stood upon the level of the moor. Out of the ground came water, rushing into conduits—not white, as it had looked from a distance, but dirty and bluish—the colour of " blanco " mixed for the cleaning of white boots.

Bessie shivered. She was interested, but she loathed her conductor instinctively ; and the wind was chill on the moor.

" Yes, I see how it gets pumped up here," she said. " But how does it get made into real clay ? "

" I'll show you," said Vinall, a second time. " Look—follow these pipes—these conduits—across the road ! "

They traversed a plank, which ran from bank to bank across a little roadway, beside the conduits in which the water rushed. Across the roadway the conduits ended ; the water discharged itself into three great pools. They were all three circular ; they looked exceeding deep. But they showed no clay substance ; they held only the water—the bluish-grey water—as before.

Bessie asked another question now.

" But this isn't *clay*, Mr. Vinall. I want to see the stuff that goes to the potteries and——"

" So you shall, Miss Bessie. There's nothing more to see here. These pits have plugs at the bottom. We pull the plugs out. The clay runs down into the drying tanks, a quarter of a mile away. Look, there are the pipes "—he pointed to a kind of hatch-way—" suppose we walk down ! "

" With pleasure, Mr. Vinall. It is on my way home ! "

They walked together down the little hill-track, beside a moorland torrent, bordered with budding wildflowers and with shrubs and stunted trees. They talked steadily. But their thoughts were not with their words.

The man was thinking this :—

" This girl is too good for a boy like Sanders—who hasn't sense enough to realize his luck—or he wouldn't neglect her in the evenings and stay stewing in his cottage with his books. Unless—unless he's up to some scheme, or on the track of some discovery or other—but that's impossible ; there isn't anything to find. And—anyway—this girl is too good for him. I'm going to marry her myself ! "

And the girl was thinking this :—

" I don't like this man—he repels and frightens me ; my instinct tells me he is bad. But I must be civil to him, and make him think that nothing has happened ; for he saw Teddy look at me—and I fear that he suspects."

They reached the drying tanks, where the grey-blue water stood stagnant ; they entered the drying house beyond. It was a low-roofed, red-tiled, barn-like building, with a gap of a yard where the tiles ended, while above the tiles, on a wooden framework, was a coping roof of tin. Men—white as millers—stood on a floor like snow-drift and were packing lumps of clay. Beside them—a ridge dividing—for thirty yards by ten or so—a white matter bubbled and seethed. A smoke rose from it. The atmosphere was stifling hot.

" What's that ? " asked Bessie. And she pointed as she spoke.

" That ? Why, the clay drying. There are furnaces underneath. All that stuff there is on the boil."

" And all the water dries away and the

"THERE WERE THREE SHARP SLAPS, A CURSE, A STRUGGLE, AND BESSIE GRANT HAD TORN HERSELF AWAY."

clay remains! What do they do with it then?"

"They break it into lumps and pack it—or crush it and put it into bags. That's what those men are doing over there."

"I see."

Bessie stood a moment, looking at the boiling, bubbling matter in the long cauldron; she glanced again at the white-clad, white-faced-men. Then she put out her hand.

"Thank you so much," she said. "I think I understand it all. And now I must be getting back to the farm!"

"And I'll see you part of the way, Miss Bessie!"

Bessie did not answer. She turned, left the drying house, and began to walk across the moor. Vinall walked beside her in silence. Suddenly he began to speak.

"Teddy doesn't seem to care much about you, Miss Bessie!" he said.

"Why not?" Bessie involuntarily smiled.

"Oh, I don't know. If I were in *his* place, engaged to a girl like you——"

"Yes?"

"I shouldn't neglect her!"

"Neglect her!"

"Yes, I shouldn't leave her alone, evening after evening, while I pored over my musty old books!"

As he spoke, his arm, strong—too strong to be removed without great effort—went round Bessie's waist. She struggled vainly. Vinall held her—and pursued.

"He's nobody—he never will be anybody—he's a clerk only; and I'm manager and shall soon have a bigger works. Why not give up Teddy, Bessie—and marry *me?*"

"Because I hate you!" Bessie's voice was indignant, and caution went to the winds. "You think yourself mighty fine *now*—but Teddy will do better in the end. You don't suppose he works so hard to improve himself for nothing, do you? I could tell you things that would surprise you—if I liked. Now, let me go—ah, let me go, I say—take that—and that—and that!"

There were three sharp slaps, a curse, a struggle, and Bessie Grant had torn herself away. She ran down the path across the moor. Vinall stood watching her, half laughing, half furious; his purpose only heightened by her ire. Then he turned and began to walk slowly up the hill. As he went his eyes were thoughtful, and the frown on his face was deep. In her anger Bessie had forgot discretion; she had hinted, though she had not revealed. Vinall knew now that the little clerk's industry was not without purpose and that something hidden and of high import was in act concerning the mine. Not for nothing had Billy Baragwanath seen Teddy grope and hunt amongst the rubbish heaps at the head of the working shafts; not without reason had Teddy sought and obtained a holiday the very next afternoon. Something must be done—and done speedily—if Bessie were to be won.

Vinall reached the clay works; he entered his office; he thought of Teddy and of Teddy's unknown purpose; he thought, too—for he loved her in his fashion—of Bessie in her father's farm. But Bessie was not there. She was hurrying across the moor. She was going to the little Poldhu mine. It was an old one, just re-opened because of the boom in tin. The Clay Works Company had bought it. An old mine "captain," home from Texas, managed it for them. And Teddy Sanders went there three days a week from the clay works to do the mine accounts.

He worked in a little tin building not far from the principal shaft. Bessie ran to it, reached the window, and tapped. The window was opened. Teddy put out his head.

"Bessie!" he cried. "What's up?"

"What's up? Oh, nothing much, Teddy. Only this. I wanted to take a nasty taste out of my mouth. Please kiss me at once!"

"Rather!"

Teddy kissed her—several times. He stood at the window, holding both her hands. Bessie regarded him with pride.

"Then you're sure, Teddy?" she said, presently.

"Sure? Rather!" Teddy's voice was gay.

"Cocksure?"

"Cockiest sure!" Bessie was kissed again.

"Then to-morrow, Teddy!"

"Yes."

"And we're made!"

"Rather!"

"Splendid!" Bessie made a feint to draw her hands away. "One more kiss for luck!"

She received it, returned it, and this time really fled to the farm-house among the trees in the moorland valley a mile and a half away.

Teddy Sanders went back to his work and his figures. He sat there working till six. He was alone, and many times he whistled, and many times he sang. Then he locked up and sought his tiny labourer's cottage, which the company had rebuilt for him, for there were no lodgings to be got upon the lonely moor. He lit his lamp; he did his

cooking, washed up, and sat down at his desk. He worked for an hour at algebra; for an hour at mineralogy; he read history for an hour on top of that. And each time he came to a word that was new to him he looked it up in a dictionary and made up and wrote down a little sentence containing it, so that it should pass into the increasing vocabulary which he was building for future use. In this little ex-Newmarket stable-boy—whose nerves had seemed permanently shattered by an accident; who had got his clerkship through the offices of a kindly owner who had seen his terrible fall—there burned a passionate desire to redeem himself, to prove himself and make good. And with the almost fanatical persistence of a *dévot* he wanted to show himself a man in the eyes of Bessie's father, who had been kindness itself to him, who had talked farming and sport to him in his loneliness, and whose horses Teddy galloped now that his shattered nerves were made whole again by the cream and milk and the heather and the good clean winds of the moor.

So, even now, when Fortune—ever kind to men who ignore her bludgeonings—had shown him a short cut across the mountain-range of toil, he worked steadily as always, unperturbed by the greatness of his luck.

It was ten and after when he shut up his history book and opened the top right-hand drawer of his desk and drew out, very lovingly, a lump of shining ore.

It was a curious colour—black, mainly—faintly streaked with grey-green, coal-grey, blue-grey, jet, and violet; it was almost imperceptibly iridescent and rainbow-hued.

He looked at it long; his eyes seemed loath to leave it; his left hand caressed it as he took pen in his right. Then he took paper from a drawer also, paper much covered, fresh sheets innocent of ink. It was the last phase, the final stage of his little *magnum opus*, of his carefully-written, laboured, ludicrously stilted report to his directors of the great discovery which was to bring him advancement and to increase the company's wealth.

He wrote long, laboriously, underlining in black and red.

And behind him—through the window, which the casement curtains, shrunk by ill-washing, failed to cover—a man stood watching all the while. It was Vinall, his rival, who understood now what the little jockey-man wrote, and the reason of his curiosity, of his delving in the dump-heaps of the mine. A bitter resentment, a black envy surged in the heart of the manager. He guessed—though he might not know with certainty—the nature of that piece of ore.

At last Sanders finished. He pinned the sheets together; he locked them in his desk with the precious ore. He rose. His head was aching. He threw up the window wide. Vinall, who had seen him coming, crouched hidden in a bush.

The door opened. Sanders came out. He walked through the little wooden gate into the lane. And Vinall guessed that, wearied with much writing, he would not immediately return.

The manager waited, listening with all his ears. The sound of the footsteps diminished, was lost in the windy night. The manager slipped into the cottage. The lamp was still alight.

The manager tried the drawer. It was locked, and the lock was good. He wrenched at the knobs furiously. One of them came off in his hand. He turned to the fireplace, took the poker, and prised it into the top of the drawer. The woodwork smashed; the drawer came open. Vinall thrust in his hand. He grasped the ore, looked at it, and immediately he knew all.

For a space he stood thinking; very quickly he had his plan. He turned to go rapidly. He reached the door; then stopped. Footsteps were audible in the lane.

Vinall hesitated. Then he snatched the lamp, closed the door, and stood behind it, holding the lamp aloft. The footsteps drew nearer; a hand was on the latch. The door opened. Teddy came forward into the room.

He ran across it; he did not realize that the lamp was not on the desk. He had eyes and thought only for the treasure within the drawer. Immediately he saw the damage he gave a loud and sudden cry.

And as he gave it there was a crash and the room went dark. The lamp, flung downwards, had fallen in fragments on the floor. Someone in the room had had the door open, had banged it behind him and was gone. Sanders turned, pulled the door open, and gave chase in the blackness of the night. He ran fast. He had good ears. He began to gain. Once he touched his quarry. But the man in front broke free and dodged away. Sanders lost him; he ran forward a little; he fell prostrate over something soft. He picked himself up, looked forward, and in front of him a building loomed. It was the drying house of the clay works. He had fallen on a pile of bags.

"HE RAN ACROSS THE ROOM. HE DID NOT REALIZE THAT THE LAMP WAS NOT ON THE DESK. HE HAD EYES AND THOUGHT ONLY FOR THE TREASURE WITHIN THE DRAWER."

He advanced cautiously, feeling his perilous way. The drying house was empty; he called aloud and had no answer; he heard nothing but the hiss and bubble of the boiling matter beside him; and the smell made him sick and faint. He turned and went down the moor again; he came back to his cottage and went in. He lit a candle and went to the drawer of his desk. The precious report was safe.

And from the back of the drawer he drew out a dozen pieces of ore—such as the one the thief had filched. None of them was so large, so magnificent, so fitted to the purpose in hand. But they would suffice; they would amply suffice.

Nothing was lost, except perhaps one thing. That thing was the secret that he had jealously guarded and kept. Someone else knew what he knew. Someone else might turn it to use!

But how? Was not this the theft of some vagrant or wanderer who, peering through the cottage window, had dreamed that the ore was gold? It did not matter; it counted for nothing; it was not even a trivial check. Teddy boiled himself some Quaker oats, ate calmly, and took his report and six pieces of ore to bed.

He slept profoundly; he was out and about by eight. It was his turn to spend the morning at the mine offices; he was in his chair at nine. He sat there working till eleven-thirty, at which hour he had permission to leave. Bessie appeared punctually, very smart in her blue coat and skirt.

"Pump up my tyre, Teddy, darling!" she said.

"Right!"

Teddy—his own bicycle prepared before breakfast—did as Bessie asked. As he stooped over her Rudge-Whitworth, he heard a familiar voice.

"Mr. Sanders, do Mr. Vinall be here, do 'ee now? He 'aven't been to the works this mornin'—and I can't find 'un at 'un's house."

"Eh, what, Baragwanath?" Teddy looked up with a start.

"I tell 'ee as how Mr. Vinall be missin'. He's not at work to-day."

"Not at work!"

"Not at work."

Teddy and Bessie looked at each other; the pump fell clattering from Teddy's hand. He leaped on his bicycle. Bessie did the same. They were off. Old Baragwanath gazed on them open-eyed. The second that he was out of earshot, Teddy began to speak.

"It was him!" he cried.

"Who?" Bessie bent over her bicycle to keep pace.

"Vinall—he broke into the cottage last night. I didn't know who it was *then*. He threw the lamp down—just as I came back. And I lost him, after a long chase in the dark!"

"But"—Bessie's voice was fearful—"did he take anything, Teddy?"

"Yes, he took a piece of ore!"

"Of ore! Then he knows?"

"I suppose so!"

Bessie jumped off her bicycle. Teddy did the same.

"He's gone!" she said.

"To St. Anselm. To see the directors."

"Yes, and by the early train. He'll say *he's* discovered it, Teddy—unless——"

"Unless what?"

"Why, doesn't the earlier train wait at Truro?"

"Yes!"

"And only gets in half an hour in front of ours?"

"Yes!"

"Why, then, we'll take a car, and we shall beat him yet. Jump on your bicycle, Teddy—and ride!"

Bessie leaped on her saddle, Teddy leaped on his. They rode, heads stooped over the handle-bars, to Pensilver, across the moor. Below them lay the bay and fishing-boats and the far-jutting headland; the wind blew behind them, the road was all downhill. They reached the town, they found a garage. Bessie gave the command.

"A car—any sort—so long as it's a fast one. You know me. I'm John Grant's daughter—we must be in St. Anselm before three. We've come without money, but we'll leave our bicycles with you till we pay!"

The proprietor stared at her, suspecting an elopement, but he gave the order at once. The car started. They rode in silence, holding each other's hands. Camborne was passed; Redruth, too, and Truro; the white chalk country of St. Anselm rose in sight. Suddenly Teddy's hand went limp.

"Bessie!" he said.

"Yes?"

"Suppose—suppose he went by car as well?"

Bessie did not answer. She was staring forward into the road. Suddenly she turned, her hand gripping Teddy's hand hard.

"We'll denounce him, Teddy. We'll tell the truth!"

"They won't believe us!"

"They *shall* believe us. I'll tell how you first found it on a dump-heap, and then how you worked to find it in the mine."

"But you can't go into their offices!"

"I *can* go into them—I *will!*"

Teddy was silent; he doubted the wisdom of Bessie's presence; he would rather go in and fight and win alone. But he gave way, not from weakness, but from affection, and because, once, but no longer, Bessie had been the better horse of the pair. She had nursed and petted and encouraged and advised him when, a shaken little bundle of nerves and physical suffering, he had come to live on her father's farm; she had managed him, stimulated him, set him in the path which he would keep. His strength had come back to him; he was a man again—more of a man than he had ever been. But the habit of Bessie's advice was with him, and he would not gainsay her because he was grateful and held her very dear. So he did not oppose her wishes; he silently gave way. The car swung into St. Anselm High Street; it stopped at the clay company's offices with their great brass plate.

Bessie got out. Teddy followed her. The two went up the steps. In the lobby stood a thin and spectacled clerk.

"I want to see the directors," said Teddy, breathlessly. "My name is Sanders. I come from the Pellegrew works. This lady is here to be a witness to what I have to say!"

The clerk—who was secretary to the two brothers who owned the clay works—hesitated, sizing them up. It was altogether irregular and out of order; the business these people had come upon was probably trivial—perhaps some local quarrel—but, on the other hand, it would be well to play for safety; it might be something grave.

"We are very busy just at present," he said, importantly. "Indeed, I am on my way to the directors, who are making up the half-yearly accounts. But, perhaps—well, just wait here while I go and see!"

He vanished. Teddy whispered as he went.

"Has Vinall been?"

"I don't think so—act as if he hasn't, Teddy. If he *has*, this man doesn't know, I feel——"

"Hush, Bessie; they'll hear us. Look, the man is coming back!"

Teddy was right. The clerk, who had put his head in at a door, was almost on them; it was too late to whisper more. The clerk spoke. His voice was sharp and annoyed.

"The directors regard your visit as most irregular, Mr. Sanders. And they do not understand the presence of this lady at all. But, on the assumption that you have really something of importance to communicate, they will see you. Step this way!"

The clerk turned and went along the corridor; Bessie and Teddy went behind. The clerk opened the door of a large room. Two men were sitting on opposite sides of a table, which was covered with red-and-black ruled foolscap and heaped with heavy books. One of the men was stolid and heavy-featured; he was the anchor of the business, the necessary drag upon the wheel. The other—and younger—was sharper-faced and alert and wiry; his eyes were dreamy, till he fixed them on any point or person, when they grew piercing and concentrated and hard. His was the imagination which had sent the business ahead.

Both of the men looked up. Teddy spoke, unspoken to; he hurried ahead with his tale.

"I am a clerk at your works at Pellegrew. I——"

"Yes, yes, we know all that," the younger brother spoke impatiently. "Cut the cackle and come to the horses and tell us why you are here!"

Teddy faltered for a second; he was still rather breathless, and the interruption put him clean out of his stride. He began to stammer. Bessie plucked him by the sleeve.

"Show them what you've brought, Teddy. That'll be horses enough!"

Teddy pulled himself together, put a hand on his hip pocket, and drew out a leather bag. The contents rattled out upon the table before four astonished eyes.

"What is this?" began the older director. He took up a piece of ore.

He did not have to wait for an answer. He got one in the exclamation which his keener brother gave.

"By heavens, Jim, it's pitch-blende!"

"Pitch-blende! Where did it come from—eh, young man—eh?"

"From the——"

Teddy was interrupted. Bessie meant to see that he got credit ample and full.

"It came from the Pellegrew mine, gentlemen, where Teddy works three days a week. He read up all about metals, to advance himself, and was looking for all sorts of things in the mine. And he found bits of this—this pitch-blende stuff—on the dump-heaps, and he went down the mine and found more. There are great big pockets of it in the old copper workings that haven't been touched!"

"You mean that"—the younger director turned to Teddy—"you actually mean there is pitch-blende in large quantities in the lode?"

"Yes, sir; there's my report"—Teddy pulled out his beautiful manuscript with a flourish—"and the seam has never been touched. In the old days, when they didn't know pitch-blende meant anything, they had it under their noses, and left it alone. But now, sir, you've only got to begin work!"

There was a pause. The two directors looked at each other; the younger made a movement and a gesture, the older followed him to the window; out of earshot they whispered and conferred. Then they returned again. The younger director spoke.

"This is very satisfactory," he said. "Very satisfactory indeed. It is more than that—it is a fine piece of initiative—one that we shall know how to reward if inspection shows, as I anticipate, that you have made no mistake. My brother and I will come to Pellegrew at once."

"Thank you, sir. I am——"

"One moment, Mr. Sanders," the elder brother intervened again. "This is not any matter for publicity at its present stage. I take it, for example, that the discovery is not known to anyone, save to this young lady and yourself? Even Mr. Vinall has no inkling of it—yet!"

Teddy hesitated and looked at Bessie; his fingers were twisting at his cap.

"I don't think Mr. Vinall knows anything," he stammered. "But——"

"Yes——" the younger brother interrupted him. "But what?"

"Someone—I don't know who—broke into my cottage last night."

"What?"

"Broke into your cottage!"

"Yes, gentlemen. And he stole a piece of ore that was lying on my desk. I returned while he was there, but he was hiding, and he broke the lamp and escaped in the dark. I chased him and lost him, and that is all I know. And I—we were afraid—Bessie—Miss Grant and me—that he would bring his discovery here."

"Here—a thief?"

"Yes, to get the credit of finding radium, instead of me."

The brothers glanced at each other; the younger one pursued.

"Your imagination runs away with you. Obviously it was a tramp or a wastrel who was looking through the window and thought that the ore was gold. I don't think it matters much, and—you look very queer, Sanders—whom do you suspect?"

"I don't know, sir."

"But *I* do, and I'm going to tell you," Bessie boldly advanced. "Mr. Vinall wanted to marry me, and I chose Teddy, and Mr. Vinall was jealous—and, besides, he's disappeared!"

"Disappeared!" Both brothers spoke in a breath.

"Yes." Teddy took up the story. "He hasn't been seen since last night. He wasn't at the works this morning, and they were hunting for him when we came away."

There was a silence. The brothers looked at each other; the younger gave his advice.

"This is strange—very—and annoying and disturbing, too. But there is no reason to suspect Mr. Vinall of disloyalty, and at the worst he could not prevent us from working radium as we wish. However, the matter must be cleared up immediately. I will 'phone to Pellegrew for news."

He turned quickly to the telephone. But, as he reached it, it rang. He caught up the receiver, put his ear to it, and spoke to the listening three.

"It's Pellegrew works calling up," he said. "Halloa—yes—I'm Julius Gunn. What! What! Good heavens, you don't mean it!—yes—go on—go on!"

He stood listening, his hand that held the receiver shaking; his right foot tap-tapping on the floor. Teddy, Bessie, and his brother stared at him, each vaguely conscious that something terrible was in act. John Gunn could not stay silent. He went to his brother's side.

"What is it, Julius?" he cried. "Tell me—quick—quick!"

His brother turned on him, now grasping the receiver with both his shaking hands.

"Vinall's body has been found in the drying house," he said. "The men came on it while they were taking out the hard dry clay. He must have fallen in while it was boiling, in the middle of the night."

"Good heavens, he's killed himself!" The older brother's voice was a whisper. "It was suicide! Were any documents found?"

His brother handed him the receiver, looked first at Teddy, then at Bessie, then walked to the middle of the room.

"I don't think that he killed himself," he said, quietly. "I think he fell in, in the dark. Because in one of his pockets they found a large piece of pitch-blende!"

FORTY YEARS IN THE HOUSE.

SOME RANDOM PARLIAMENTARY RECOLLECTIONS.

By

THE RT. HON. THOMAS BURT,

M.P. for the Morpeth Division, the Father of the House of Commons, and the doyen of Liberal-Labour M.P.'s.

IT is a common habit for those who have reached their allotted span to speak of the days of their youth and early manhood as of the golden age of the world. Whether this is due to distance that enchants the view, or whether it is due to natural resistance against the younger generation knocking at the door with new ideas and ideals, new standards of morality, new visions of life, I am unable to determine from personal experience. For, though I have passed my own allotted span and have for many years now borne the title of "Father of the House of Commons," I cannot feel with the majority of my fellow-septuagenarians that the old days were more halcyon than the new days, or that the twentieth century is plunging headlong into destruction.

THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS BURT.
Photo. by Russell & Sons.

During my forty years' consecutive experience of Parliamentary life I have, of course, witnessed many transformations; and, while it must always be a little melancholy to see the old order changing as it yields place to the new, I consider that these transformations have, upon the whole, been emphatically for the better. Certainly, we have lost something in courtesy; but we have more than made up for that, I think, in all-round efficiency and application. M.P.'s work harder than they used to do, for public opinion is now far more exacting. The electorate has wakened up; and if the modern M.P. does not keep his nose well down to the grindstone, the modern constituent grows restive and discontented.

True, when I first entered the House, in 1874, I found that it was always crowded at question-time, just as it is to-day. But once the questions were over, members, except on special occasions, had a trick of slipping away in battalions, not to return again till ten or eleven o'clock, for the division. Such a career is neither arduous nor exhausting. Nowadays, "putting in an appearance" is not enough. Of course, there was no eleven o'clock rule in the 'seventies, and sometimes the House sat on into the cold, still hours of the morning. But the M.P.'s of that period certainly did not perform the amount of solid work we get through in a twentieth-

century session. The pace was slower and the interest less keen.

Another change that has taken place in my time has been the disappearance of set and formal speeches in favour of a brisker, less rhetorical style of debate. Forty years ago speeches, in the general run, were apt rather to resemble essays or treatises; their literary style was often well-nigh perfect; but in their lifeless perfection they only too often reminded one of beautifully-painted pictures. Nor would anybody have dreamt of addressing the Speaker in the rather familiar, colloquial manner to which we are now accustomed; yet—paradoxical as it may sound—it is beyond question that the Speaker in those days had less power than he now enjoys to keep hon. members to the point.

I am reminded by these remarks of what is, in all probability, the most tedious speech I ever heard—one delivered by Mr. Biggar, an Irish member. This all-too-memorable speech was so uncompromisingly dull and so consistently long-winded that at one point there were only five members listening to it on the benches; but the scantiness of his audience did not appear to perturb the speaker in the least, and he went on, hour after hour, droning out his facts and arguments with the stolid monotony of a diligent child practising five-finger exercises on the piano. This monotony was rendered still more soporific by an almost toneless delivery which at times became so inaudible that the Speaker had to call Mr. Biggar to account.

"I regret to have to interrupt the hon. member," said the Speaker, politely, "but during the past few minutes I have not been able to catch a single word that he has uttered."

There was a weary titter from those present in the House; but Mr. Biggar was nothing abashed.

"Very well, sir," he answered, "that is easily remedied. I will come nearer." Whereupon he calmly gathered up in his arms a great bundle of papers and Blue books from which he had been quoting, marched sedately down the bench till he was close to the Speaker, and there proceeded with his oration, which bade fair to rival the Tennysonian brook.

That speech lasted close upon five hours, and I venture to assert that only one person in the whole House displayed the faintest interest in it. Who that person was I leave the reader to conjecture. Mr. Biggar was a true, brave, most resolute man. He cared little, if at all, for the particular Bill that he was opposing, but he wanted to prevent the next Bill from being reached, and that object he attained.

On the other hand, I have known long speeches every word of which held the House tense with breathlessness from first to last. The speech in which Mr. Gladstone first introduced his famous Home Rule Bill lasted something like four hours, but I have known single minutes that seemed longer. Never before nor since have I seen the House so crowded. Members turned up at break of day to secure places, and by noon the Chamber was so full, even in its galleries, that extra seats had to be brought in. Mr. Gladstone was not habitually a long speaker, but he always rose to great occasions. He was a noble orator and a past-master in the art of the impromptu. For loftiness of ideals and for depth of passion, we shall not look upon his like again.

I recall my first meeting with him very vividly. I was always intensely interested in the subject of the extension of the franchise to the counties, and when, shortly before my election, I was invited to join a deputation on the matter, I accepted eagerly. The deputation consisted of poor men, who had journeyed all the way from Durham and Northumberland at great personal inconvenience. On the morning fixed for the audience the news was published that Mr. Gladstone had been taken ill and was confined to his bed. We turned up at the appointed place in a very dispirited frame of mind, convinced that we would be sent away without seeing him and that our mission would be fruitless. But we did not know the G.O.M. He realized how inconvenient and expensive a postponement would be for the deputation of poor men who had to meet him, and, with his unfailing large-heartedness, he rose out of his sick-bed in order that we might not be disappointed. Thus, my first impression of Mr. Gladstone—an impression that has never left me—was of a leonine figure leaning ponderously on a thick stick. He looked very ill, so ill that I whispered to one of my companions:—

"Poor man; it's plain he can't last much longer."

My prediction was splendidly falsified. Yet in 1874 the G.O.M. actually did retire on the ground of "advanced age," being succeeded in the leadership of the Liberal Party by Lord Hartington. Thus, he may be said to have conducted the Home Rule Campaign in his second childhood!—the most stalwart second childhood statesman was ever blessed with.

When I entered Parliament it was ablaze with the genius of old members whose light was expiring in a last flare of glory, and young members whose light no bushel could dim, much less obliterate. Disraeli was still there —past his best, but a fine debater still; and I often listened to his brilliant sallies with the keenest appreciation. Before I had been long in the House of Commons, however, "Dizzy" passed away to the Upper Chamber. I remember his last appearance in our midst, and the strange manner of his farewell. Disraeli was, of course, a Front-Bench man, and so generally went out from behind the Speaker's chair; but this time, when the House adjourned, he strode deliberately down the centre of the floor to the Bar of the House, and there, turning round, stood a while taking a long, last glance at the scene of so many of his triumphs. At length, he walked out through the folding doors, and the House of Commons never saw him again. Next morning, the papers announced his elevation to the Peerage. I was fortunate enough to hear Mr. Disraeli's last speech in the House of Commons and Lord Beaconsfield's first speech in the House of Lords.

At the time of my entry, the House of Commons also numbered still such great statesmen as Robert Lowe, John Bright, and W. E. Gladstone among its active members; while of the younger generation, I may pick out Mr. Balfour, who became an M.P. almost simultaneously with me. Two or three years ago, casually meeting Mr. Balfour, he said:—

"I was just wondering whether you or I came into the House first."

"We came in at the same time in 1874," I reminded him.

"Then how is it," he asked, "that you are the Father of the House of Commons and I am not?"

"Well," I replied, "you may remember that I never lost my seat." He left me, laughing heartily.

Mr. Balfour did not speak often at the beginning of his career. He was considered a leisurely philosopher, who liked to take his ease. I cannot recall his maiden speech, but I can recall the maiden speeches of many other hon. members who afterwards soared to the pinnacles of political fame. Some of them were singularly devoid of promise. Mr. John Burns's maiden speech was, for example, much too "platformy," and I little guessed that he would some day develop into one of the best speakers in the House.

Mr. Asquith, on the other hand, scored a complete success with his first oration; while Joseph Chamberlain's was a real eye-opener, despite his obvious nervousness. I remember his speaking to me in the course of a debate on a Prisons Bill, and saying that he was going "to take the plunge." A magnificent plunge it was. Somebody likened the speech to a leading article in the *Times*. I can picture him now as he delivered that speech, a slightly-made, youthful, almost boyish-looking M.P., with a black coat fearlessly unbuttoned to display the waistcoat and disclose the shirt-collar and necktie. Joseph Chamberlain was then what used to be called a "rank, red Radical."

I heard Austen's maiden effort, too; and I remember how visibly affected Mr. Chamberlain was when Gladstone afterwards referred to the young man's speech as "an achievement that must have been dear to a father's heart."

The House of Commons is almost invariably kind and considerate when a new member rises to deliver his maiden effort, especially if the new member displays a certain amount of becoming deference and modesty. If, however, relying on a reputation made outside the House in politics or literature, he at once adopts a superior or too self-confident tone, the House immediately becomes chilly and antipathetic.

Joseph Chamberlain told a good story illustrative of this attitude. When he was first elected, an old member who had known him personally went up to him and said:—

"Would you mind, as I am an older member, my giving you a bit of advice?"

"I should be very glad to have it," replied Mr. Chamberlain.

"Well," said the old man, "you know you have come into the House rather late, and you have come in with some sort of reputation from outside. The House of Commons does not like outside reputation; it is accustomed to make and unmake its own; and as you are going very shortly to make your maiden speech, I think the House of Commons would take it as a compliment, and you would be all the better off, if you could contrive to break down a little!"

As for my own maiden speech—if I may be pardoned for referring to it—that was delivered in support of Sir (then Mr.) George Trevelyan's motion to extend the franchise to the counties. It lasted about twenty minutes, and I remember the glow of pride that warmed me through and through when Mr. Robert Lowe, who was not addicted to extravagant eulogy, speaking afterwards, offered me his compliments in the course of a brilliant

THE AMAZING SCENE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS OVER THE SECOND HOME RULE BILL IN 1893.

oration. I had been in Parliament almost three months before I ventured to participate in the subtle sport of catching the Speaker's eye; but it was not because I was nervous that I allowed so long a period to elapse, but because I had an idea that it would be bad form for a new member to thrust himself forward too speedily. I was far less nervous when making that maiden speech in Parliament than I have been many times since.

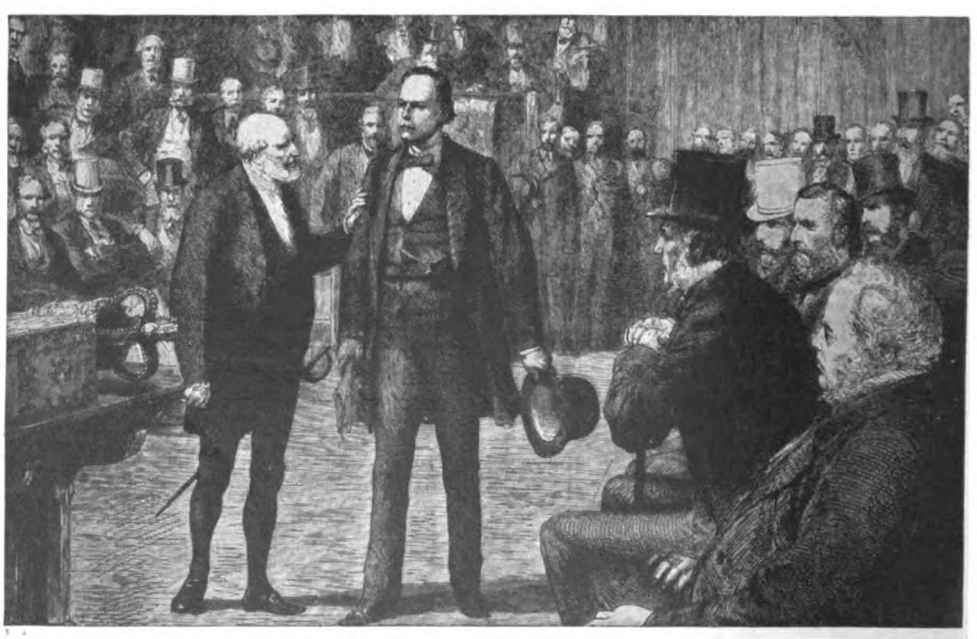
My greatest attack of nerves, however, synchronized not unnaturally with the very first public speech I ever delivered—or, rather, attempted to deliver. This was at a teetotal meeting in a Primitive Methodist chapel at Old Hartley. It was an unqualified fiasco. Before I had spoken many sentences I had to stop, and they wished to sing a temperance melody until I recovered. But to this I demurred, thinking it too funereal. I asked the chairman to call up his next man. Which he did.

I was only seventeen at the time, and I registered a solemn vow that I would never try to speak in public again till I possessed a pair of whiskers to cover my blushes.

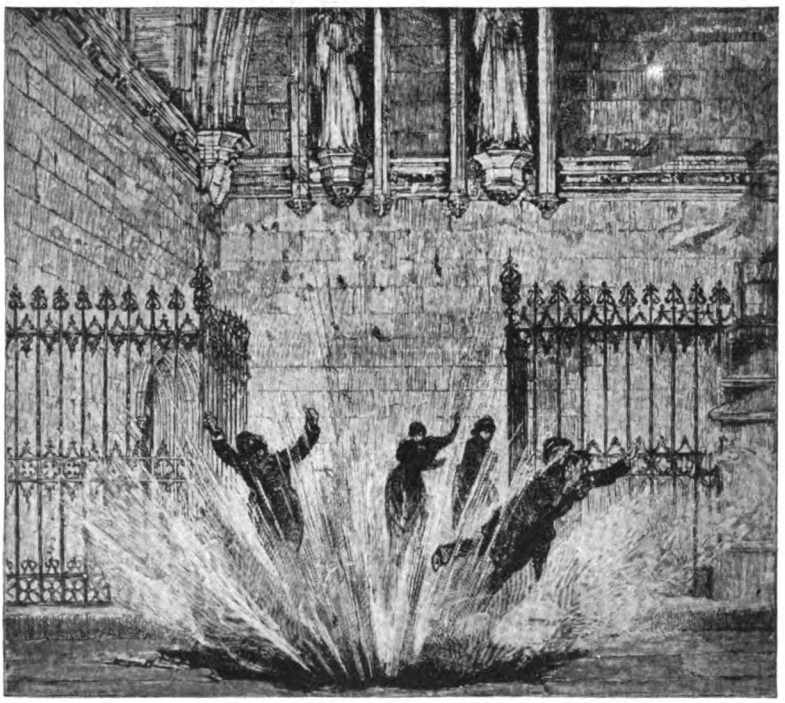
Many of my most vivid recollections are, of course, connected with the great Home Rule conflict. No one who was present in the House of Commons in the summer of 1886 on the occasion of the defeat of Mr. Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill can ever forget the bitter enthusiasm of that night. The debate had lasted many weeks, and nobody knew how it would end, so evenly was the House divided on the matter. Indeed, it was impossible to

tell the result till the Speaker actually announced the fateful figures to that hushed assembly. Then the excitement broke loose. As soon as it was clear to the Conservatives that they had gained the day, they rose as one man and let out deafening cheer on cheer, waving their handkerchiefs and order papers and even flinging them into the air that was so thick with frenzied volumes of sound. As soon as they sat down, the Liberal Unionists on the opposite side of the House sprang to their feet and saluted their allies across the floor with shouts that must have been responsible for many a sore throat next morning. All this was unusually high-pitched, but quite in order. Now, however, the Irish Nationalists overstepped the prescribed Parliamentary limits of emotional expression. Jumping up in a fever of indomitability and disappointment, they called out: "Three cheers for the Grand Old Man," and those three cheers were given with a ringing, defiant ardour by Nationalists and Liberals alike. The Speaker did not interfere, this being one of the great exceptions that he can afford to overlook, thanks to the absolute sovereignty of his rule.

Seven years later there was a still more amazing scene, this time over Mr. Gladstone's second Home Rule Bill, one of the stages of which was being passed with the assistance of the uncompromising guillotine. When the clock reached the tick ordained for the application of the closure, Mr. Chamberlain was in the middle of a speech. As he sat down, one of the Irish members gave utterance to some insulting remark against him that was audible all over the House. The Conservatives, quickly incensed, appealed to the Chairman of Committees. The Chairman disallowed the appeal and ordered that the division should be proceeded with. The Liberals and Nationalists filed into the Lobby; but the Conservatives, whose anger had been stimulated by the application of the guillotine, would not be put down, and refused to leave their seats until their appeal was laid before the Speaker. One of the Liberals went over to them and began expostulating, committing the indiscretion of sitting on the seat generally occupied by the Conservative leader. A Conservative gave him a push. A shindy seemed imminent. A number of Nationalists, who had observed the incident from the doorway of the House, hurried up. Their sudden disappearance brought in another rush of M.P.'s from outside, eager to see what was going on. There was an ugly crush, and an Irish Nationalist was struck by an Irish Conservative. This excess brought the House to its senses, however. The Speaker resumed his Chair, the Conservatives made their appeal, the Speaker called upon the member who had insulted Mr. Chamberlain to apologize, the apology was made, and the division proceeded forthwith.



THE SCENE IN THE HOUSE WHEN MR. BRADLAUGH WAS ARRESTED BY THE SERJEANT-AT-ARMS.



THE DYNAMITE EXPLOSION IN WESTMINSTER HALL IN 1885.

One of the most exciting periods that I can recall occurred at the beginning of 1885, when memories of Guy Fawkes were revived by two infamous dynamite outrages in the House. I vividly recall the devastation caused in Westminster Hall, when a bomb was placed on the staircase leading to the crypt by a cowardly miscreant who diabolically chose a Saturday for his purpose, the Houses of Parliament generally being thronged with visitors on that day. The force of the explosion was so great that every pane of glass was blown out of the large stained window, and the entire Hall smoked overpoweringly with the dust of ages that had been displaced from its long sleeping-place on the rafters.

Then there were the many Bradlaugh scenes. It will be within the recollection of some readers that when Bradlaugh was elected to Parliament in 1880, he claimed the right to affirm instead of taking the oath, on the ground that he had repeatedly done so in Courts of law. Although the objections to allowing him to affirm were of a purely technical nature, no provision for such a contingency existing in the rules of the House, there was a very strong current of feeling against Bradlaugh among M.P.'s, owing to his so-called heterodox opinions. The debates on the question were long and bitter, and many violent scenes took place. Once Bradlaugh, denying the right of the House to exclude him, actually forced his way to the table of the House and administered the oath to himself. On another occasion he was forcibly ejected by police-constables, and on another he was ordered into the clock tower under custody of the Serjeant-at-Arms.

Mr. Bradlaugh was a noble-spirited and most lovable man. Though I did not share his opinions—except on politics—I felt for him great admiration and warm affection. At his request I was one of his sponsors when he walked up the floor of the House to take his seat, the other sponsor being his colleague, the late Henry Labouchere.

Arthur Wellesley Peel was the Speaker during that reign of terror, and he suffered more than one bad quarter of an hour in connection with these dynamite sensations. One night word was brought to him that an anarchist, dressed in female attire, had gained entrance into the Ladies' Gallery just above his head with the object of flinging a bomb into the crowded Chamber. Happily, the desperado's courage failed him at the crisis and no outrage was perpetrated; but it was with a feeling of deep relief that Mr. Speaker put the question "That this House do now adjourn" at the close of a sitting that must have strained his anxiety to the utmost.

Mention of Mr. Speaker reminds me of the fact that, since I was elected a member of the House, I have sat under four Speakers in all: Speaker Brand, Speaker Peel, Speaker Gully, and Speaker Lowther. All these gentlemen, I can state from personal experience, filled their responsible office with remarkable tact and discretion, in return for which they received the unqualified respect of every member of Parliament. Apart from occasional

unavoidable "flare-ups," the President and the members of the House of Commons work splendidly hand-in-hand. The status of Mr. Speaker has undergone a strange and welcome metamorphosis since the days of the long contest between Parliament and the Stuart kings, when the struggles of the Commons to establish constitutional government were repeatedly thwarted by a Speaker who was rather the slave of the Sovereign than the President of the people's assembly. Correspondingly, the attitude of the members towards their President was far less respectful. Entries are to be found in the Journals of the House during the reigns of the Stuart Kings, in which we read :—

> The House was informed by Mr. Speaker that Sir E. Herbert put not off his hat to him, but put out his tongue and popped his mouth with his finger in scorn.

And again :—

> The House was informed by Mr. Speaker that Mr. T. T——, in a loud and violent manner, and contrary to the usage of Parliament, standing near the Speaker's chair, cried "baw!" in the Speaker's ear, to the great terror and concernment of the Speaker and the members of the House.

Of course, we had already changed all that when I took my seat under Mr. Brand in 1874, just as we had already changed the ancient practice of selling Parliamentary votes. Mr. Brand was once asked whether, in the course of his lengthy Parliamentary experience, he had ever heard of money passing for the vote of a member.

"No," he answered ; "never. The nearest approach to it I have ever known was the finding of a suit of clothes for an M.P. who stated that without them he would be unable to attend the House at a critical division."

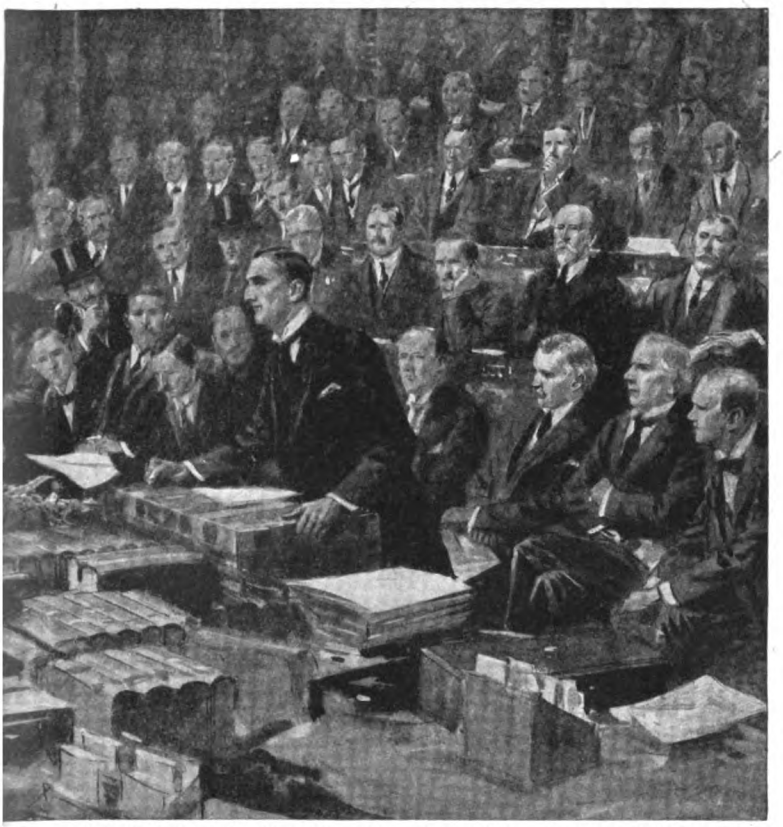
Mr. Brand will long live in my memory for his *coup d'état* of February, 1881, when, after a sitting which lasted forty-two hours, he declared the state of business to be so urgent as to justify him in summarily closing the debate.

SIR EDWARD GREY MAKING HIS FAMOUS SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF BURT DECLARES, "TO WHICH

This incident, which led to one of the most painful scenes I have ever witnessed in the House, might be called the culminating point of the obstructionist tactics carried on so systematically by the Irish Nationalists, under Parnell, with a view to forcing attention to the claims of Ireland. During the debates on the South African Bill in 1877, the manœuvres of the obstructionists were carried to such a pitch that the House was compelled to pass new rules of procedure to the effect that when a member has twice been declared out of order, a motion may be made that the member be not heard during the remainder of the debate ; also, that no member should move to report progress or that the Speaker do leave the chair, twice in the same committee.

All the same, on July 31st, when the South African Bill was still under discussion, the Irish Nationalists kept us in continuous session for twenty-six hours, and obstruction continued to be used successfully after that by Mr. Parnell and his friends in regard to other measures.

These tactics reached their zenith early in



COMMONS ON AUGUST 3RD, 1914—"THE MOST MOVING SPEECH," MR. I HAVE EVER LISTENED."

the session of 1881, when Mr. Forster, as Irish Secretary, introduced his Bill for the Better Protection of Person and Property in Ireland. The session began at four o'clock on a Monday and, thanks to the Irish Nationalists, the House was still sitting at nine o'clock on Wednesday morning. At this point, Mr. Speaker Brand took the matter into his own hands and, declaring that a new and exceptional course was necessary, refused to call on any more of the Nationalist members to speak. Then he peremptorily put the first reading of the Bill, which was carried. This was admittedly an arbitrary and coercive proceeding, unwarranted by practice or precedent—possibly the most courageous step ever taken by a Speaker in discharging the duty of his office.

Naturally, the obstructionists were furious; and next day thirty-six Irish members, including Parnell himself, who defied the Speaker's authority, were one by one suspended and excluded from the House—this being a scene so painful that I do not care to dwell on it in detail.

A more recent instance of obstruction that I shall not easily forget occurred in the spring of 1907, when the Opposition set every obstacle they could devise in the way of an important Government Bill. The Government declared that the House should not rise till they got the Bill through, and by dint of merciless use of the guillotine, they forced it through in a single sitting.

But it was the longest sitting for a quarter of a century—the longest, indeed, since the sitting that led to the wholesale suspension of Irish Nationalists. It lasted twenty-seven hours, and that without a break for meals. Members had to feed when and how they could. Over 1,500 dinners were served, while 680 whiskies-and-sodas, 175 brandies-and-sodas, 525 cups of coffee, and over 1,000 cups of tea lubricated the dry throats of debaters and listeners.

And the whole debate might quite easily have been finished off within a couple of hours!

Obstruction is always aggravating, for it wastes so much time—and time in the House of Commons belongs to the nation. Divisions are another time-wasting performance which I should like to see simplified. Whenever a division takes place, about twelve or fifteen minutes are occupied by M.P.'s marching through their respective lobbies. The time required for a division was considerably diminished by the ingenuity of Mr. Lewis Harcourt, when he was First Commissioner of Works.

Most tedious of all, however, is the reading of petitions. Apart from those of the first magnitude, they are hardly worth the paper they are written on, and I doubt whether any important Bill has ever been either passed or rejected as the result of the most numerously-signed petition. Nothing so speedily clears the benches as the Clerk getting up to read one of these seemingly-interminable

documents. The petition against the Licensing Bill contained 750,000 signatures and was said to be seven and a half miles in length! It took several men to carry it to the table.

It would be hard, indeed, for me to name the finest speech which I have ever heard delivered in the House of Commons, but there can be no question that the most memorable oration was that delivered by Sir Edward Grey on August 3rd, 1914—than which day there has been none more momentous in the whole history of the House of Commons.

I have seen the House fuller than it was on this unforgettable occasion, but never, I believe, more unanimous. Nor, when I say that I have seen the House fuller, must you imagine that there was any superfluity of vacant space. Not only was every bench full, but, as on the day when the first Home Rule Bill was introduced by Mr. Gladstone, four rows of chairs were placed down the centre of the House, and on this Liberals and Unionists and Nationalists and Ulstermen sat cheek by jowl. All party debate was hushed that day, for, after the violation of Belgium's neutrality, we knew that there was only one course possible for this country. The gallery of the noble lords, too, might be said, in journalistic parlance, to have "creaked with coronets." Lord Derby secured the much-prized seat over the clock, but other peers were not so fortunate.

As for Sir Edward Grey's speech, it was probably the most moving to which I have ever listened. Not that Sir Edward made any attempt to carry us away. He never indulged in the declamatory methods of Burke or the sentimental modulations of other famous orators of the past. His delivery, throughout, was calm and repressed, not unlike the delivery of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain; but, beneath the surface, it vibrated with a deeply-rooted feeling that was shared by the whole House which he was addressing. Most of the cheering with which the speech was punctuated came from the Unionist benches; but the "pacifists," if I may employ that term, were in complete accord with the sentiments expressed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and their agreement was not less emphatic for being less vocal. But there was one point at which I think every member present must have vented his feelings in cheers. This was when Sir Edward delivered himself of the passage: "My own view is this. If a foreign fleet, engaged in a war which France had not sought, in which she had not been the aggressor, came down the English Channel and bombarded and battered the undefended coasts of France, we could not stand aside." Sir Edward's fist descended with a bang. It was as though a mine had been exploded; and the whole House burst into thunder upon thunder of acclamation.

I think I may say that, with a single exception, on which I will not dwell, not a jarring note was struck that day. Mr. Churchill, who, two years before, had had a book thrown at his head in the House, received a tremendous reception. Another striking moment came when Mr. Redmond gave his pledge that the Nationalist and Ulster Volunteers would hold Ireland for the Empire against the enemy when British troops were withdrawn. It was, indeed, a stirring day—a day on which proceedings opened, strangely enough, with the Glasgow Corporation Bill, while no fewer than seventy-six questions were down on the paper to be answered!

Unfortunately, I was laid low by illness not long after this, and it was many months before I again entered the House. It was well for me, however, that I was able to read the newspapers in the meantime, for had I not been acquainted with the remarkable change that had overspread Parliamentary life in consequence of the European War, the sight which greeted my eyes when I again entered the House of Commons might well have led me to conjecture that I had lost my senses.

For there, fraternizing on the same bench, I saw those old and, as one had always thought, irreconcilable antagonists, Mr. Asquith and Mr. Bonar Law. It would scarcely surprise me now to find that, in certain circumstances, oil would mix with water! There, too, was Mr. Lloyd George, arm-in-arm, so to speak, with Mr. Balfour. There was Mr. Runciman, sitting alongside of Lord Robert Cecil, while—greatest miracle of all—there were Sir Edward Carson and Mr. Augustine Birrell actually shoulder to shoulder instead of being, as had always seemed an irresistible law of nature, face to face.

Nor was the Opposition Bench any less amazingly metamorphosed. Mr. Pease, Mr. Chaplin, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Robertson, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Lough, Sir Harry Verney, Sir Robert Finlay, Lord Valentia—there they were, all in the same coach—a coach that had surely been called into existence by the waving of some magic wand. I have seen some strange Parliamentary changes in my time, but never a change more singular—or, let me add, more stirring—than this.

The motto in the House appeared to be, not "Business as Uusal," but "Business as Never Before."

THE MISSIONARY AND HIS MISSION.

By JAMES BARR.

Illustrated by Emile Verpilleux.

I.

MCALISTER glared over the top of his glasses and over the top of the letter he held in his hand; glared at nothing at all and spoke to no one at all, except himself.

"Don't like this letter!" he said. "Don't like the feel of it! Don't like the taste of it! Don't like the sound of it! Don't like any part, feature, or aspect of it! Sure as my name's McAlister, I do certainly not."

A second time he read the letter, then again glanced over his spectacles and again spoke to the same audience.

"Too much 'private' about it. Wants a 'private' interview, at my 'private' house, the interview to be strictly 'private.' Who in thunder is Benjamin Horn, and what in thunder does Benjamin Horn want with all this 'private'? Sounds to me like a missionary. Says he wants to see me in a good cause. That's missionary. Says the interview will be for my good. That's missionary. I suspect good that is offered to me without me asking for it. Good causes usually run to money, for the other fellow. If this Benjamin Horn isn't a missionary, then he's a blackmailer. Let him sail in. I'm ready for him, missionary or blackmailer. He says nine to-night. It's on the stroke of nine, so I won't need to guess and wonder much longer. There goes the door-bell. Here comes, I'll bet my boots, Benjamin Horn."

Big, burly Sandy McAlister, builder and contractor, arose from his chair feeling quite confident that he would not need to sit down again until he had shown Benjamin Horn the door. McAlister did not like missionaries; no one likes blackmailers; and the builder's mind was made up that Benjamin Horn must turn out to be one or other. And the moment he clapped eyes on the visitor McAlister said, under his breath, "A missionary, or I'm a Zulu!"

Horn did not hold out his hand. He blinked behind those strong glasses of his, trying to locate where the owner of the house stood. He was an old man, he must have been seventy, his head white, his long beard white, his face white. Without waiting for an invitation Horn pulled the nearest chair to him and sat down. "Missionary, or I'm an Iroquois! Any other man but a missionary would wait till a chair was offered him," muttered McAlister, growing a little warm. Then he out with it.

"You're a missionary?"

The man placed his hat on his lap and blinked at his host. Presently he said, with a voice that quavered from age:—

"I suppose I am—in a way. I had not thought of it in that light, but now you mention missionary I believe I am, in a way."

"Yes, and you've come to pitch the tale to me. Well, I can tell you before you start you'll be wasting your breath. I'm an old bird."

"So am I," said the visitor, quietly. "It's because I'm an old bird that I've come here. Old birds have not any time to lose. I am losing no time."

"That's all very fine," blurted out McAlister, who, from some reason he could not fathom, felt uncomfortable under the blink of Horn, as if he were doing the old man great injustice. "That's all very fine, but you are wasting my time. Am *I* losing time?"

"When you hear me through I'll leave you to answer your own question," said Benjamin Horn.

"Fire ahead, then," and McAlister sat abruptly down in his armchair.

"Thank you," said the visitor, placing his hat on the floor, and taking his stick in both hands he leaned on it and blinked at the contractor. "You know Quilter—Jeremy Quilter?"

"Well, what about it?"

"And you know the firm of Portland and Bliss?"

"'WHEN YOU HEAR ME THROUGH I'LL LEAVE YOU TO ANSWER YOUR OWN QUESTION,' SAID BENJAMIN HORN."

"Well, what about it?"

Benjamin Horn remained silent for a time, as if turning over in his mind whether or not to resent this reception. Meanwhile McAlister was saying to himself, "Know Quilter? I should think I do, the miserable skinflint miser. But his money's good, and I'm after a slice of it. Know Portland and Bliss? Yes, I know 'em, and compete against 'em. They're my only rivals in the building line. Know 'em? 'Course I do. What's this old missionary driving at? Going

to get me to love my neighbour, I suppose!" Then out loud he demanded, "Well, what about it?"

When Horn next spoke there was no quaver in his tones. The reception was not of the kind he had anticipated.

"Your firm is going bankrupt, Mr. McAlister."

"What? What's that you say?"

Sandy McAlister half started from his chair. His eyes glared a glare of mixed astonishment and anger.

"I say you—for you, I understand, are the firm—I say you are on the verge of bankruptcy."

McAlister arose and took two steps forward, so that he towered over the old man. He barked:—

"What nonsense is this you speak? How dare you make such a statement?"

"The statement happens to be the truth," quietly answered Benjamin Horn.

For a minute, both by look and gesture, McAlister appeared to be on the point of reaching down, grasping Horn by the scruff of the neck, and throwing him out of the door. Suddenly the tension of muscle and nerve relaxed. He laughed long and loud.

"You're crazy," he asserted, when he caught his breath. "You're daft. But go on. Let me hear how idiotic you can be. I'm on the verge of bankruptcy, you say? I say I never was so financially sound as I am this minute. You say, and I say. Now, which of us is lying?"

"Neither," answered the caller, quiet as ever. "I imagine it is not your way, lying isn't. Nor is it mine, to-night. We have each made a statement. Is it necessary for one of us to be telling an untruth?"

"It strikes me, yes. I say I am financially as sound as a bell; you say I am on the verge of bankruptcy. How can each statement be true?

"Easily. At this moment you are solvent, absolutely. May you not nevertheless be on the brink of bankruptcy?"

Benjamin Horn waited a long time for an answer, then repeated the questions asked at the beginning of the interview.

"You know Jeremy Quilter?"

"Yes, I do."

"You know the firm of Portland and Bliss?"

"Yes, I do.".

A pause.

"By coupling the names I have mentioned with your own can your brain deduce bankruptcy?" asked the visitor.

McAlister replied at once:—

"No, I see no connection"; then, after a pause, continued, "I have no business dealings with Portland and Bliss. They are my bitterest business rivals. My father vaguely attributed his insolvency to them. Certainly they have done everything in their power to keep me from establishing a sound business on the ruins of my father's. It has taken me more than twenty years to get my head well above water—but my head is high and dry now. So much for Portland and Bliss. Quilter I have done business with, and hope to do more, but I do not thereby deduce bankruptcy."

"Do you know that Quilter has bought a half share in Portland and Bliss?"

"Well, I heard he had bought shares in the firm. I did not know he had bought half the business," admitted McAlister.

"Quilter has a half interest. Does this lead you to smell a rat?"

McAlister shook his head.

"I fear you cannot see much beyond your nose, Mr. McAlister."

"Never you mind the length of my nose or the shortness of my sight. My sight has been long enough to make a success of the contracting business, and that's all I ask of my sight. As for my nose, except that I take good care to keep it out of other people's business, I trouble little else about it."

The visitor nodded half-a-dozen times, then said:—

"Some men would take that for a snub and clear out, but since you cannot put two and two together I must do that sum for you. Jeremy Quilter is the owner of that large plot of land on which the chemical works are to be built. You know that? Very well. You also know that Quilter has asked for tenders for the building of the works? Very well. And you know he has asked you to tender? Now, why, just before he is to build one of the largest chemical works in the county—why did he invest in the only firm in this town that seriously competes with you, and, having done so, why does he ask you to tender?"

"Business! Jeremy Quilter is a good man. He seeks the lowest tender. That's all there is to it, I think."

"I do not think; I *know*," said Horn.

"Then tell me. But first let me know where you come in. What are you asking for the information?"

"I am asking only what I'll get—satisfaction. That's all, from you."

"Humph! Then the information can't be worth much."

"It is for you to judge after you hear what I have to say. You are tendering for the factory?"

"Yes; my tender is already made out. I have only to add my signature."

"Don't. Do not put pen to any such thing. If you do you're ruined. You tender in the dark. You do not know that deep down under the ground upon which that factory is to be built are a number of springs; indeed, one quarter of the space upon which the foundations are to stand is nothing less than quicksand. Jeremy Quilter knows this. So does the firm of Portland and Bliss. Now can you see bankruptcy looming before you?"

"Go ahead," was all McAlister said. He was thinking very fast and hard.

"You see, Quilter profits in two ways. I take it he is to pay you by instalments, so much each time the building reaches a definite stage forward?"

"Yes; first instalment when the foundations are completed."

"Precisely! And you'll be held to the contract. You'll spend most, if not all, of your money before you get the foundation laid. In the end you'll be obliged to cry 'Enough.' In this way Quilter gets his terribly expensive foundation laid for a small price, and at the same time breaks the rival to his building firm. He gets twice blest. Portland and Bliss get once blest, in eliminating you from future competition. You are on the verge of bankruptcy, Mr. McAlister."

A long time McAlister sat glaring at the toes of his boot. Certainly if what the stranger told him were true, bankruptcy did confront him. And Quilter? Quilter's keenness at a bargain was well known, but would he be guilty of quite such sharp practice? The rival builders would stop short at nothing, that he recognized. When next he glanced up Benjamin Horn stood ready to depart.

"Just a moment," said McAlister. "Please sit down. What you tell me is startling. You are sure of your facts?"

"Quite."

"How do you come to know——"

"Please do not ask me any questions, for I shall answer none. I have done you the good turn I wished to do you."

"But why should you want to do me a good turn? I do not know you."

"I have private reasons."

McAlister out with it.

"Do you expect me to pay for this information?"

"The only pay I ask is that you pay attention to the information."

"Well, it beats me," admitted McAlister, as he shut the door after seeing the old man out. "In the morning I'll see my solicitor and lay the whole matter before him."

"I think it will turn out," said the solicitor next morning, after McAlister had told him all—"I think it will turn out that this man Horn is in the pay of your rivals, Portland and Bliss. The object of his visit and the end of his story is to frighten you off bidding for the work. You say he refused money for his information?"

"I did not offer him money flat down, but I broached the subject of payment and he would not hear of any such thing."

"Not he! You see, if you had paid him you might have been tempted to kick up a shindy once you found there were no quicksands. Your rivals argue that as the matter has not cost you hard cash you will keep mum. If you had parted with money you might fly into a temper and raise a row. When does your tender go in?"

"At noon to-day."

"Very well; before sending it in call back here, say at eleven o'clock. I shall have drawn up a clear statement of what has happened, and all that Horn has told you. You sign the statement in the presence of witnesses. Then should it by any manner of chance turn out that Horn has told the truth, the moment you strike quicksands we'll repudiate the contract, and at least threaten conspiracy proceedings."

"That's the ticket!" exclaimed McAlister.

The affidavit was made, the tender sent in, and in the afternoon McAlister received word that his tender had been accepted.

II.

Now that he had secured the job rage boiled up in the soul of McAlister. That his rivals should have tried such a mean trick on him, such an obvious trick, maddened him. Never in his life had he set foot on the premises of Messrs. Portland and Bliss, but now McAlister determined to confront his rivals. Snatching up his hat, he made off and entered their offices. Shown into the private room of the partners, McAlister found Bliss standing near the door, his hand held out in welcome. Portland stood by his desk attempting the impossible—to look pleasant. McAlister refused to see the proffered hand, yet indignation for the moment tied his tongue. Bliss was the first to speak.

"We own beat!" he exclaimed. "We thought the Quilter contract ours, but your

tender bested us. All's fair in love and war. Congratulations!"

"Never mind about love, and never mind about war," bellowed McAlister. "I'm here to talk of common honesty, just plain, everyday common honesty. Perhaps it is a commodity you two are not acquainted with?"

Bliss looked an expostulation. Portland's eye remained inflexibly fixed upon McAlister. His expression expressed as near to nothing as is possible.

"Won't you take a seat, Mr. McAlister?" said Bliss; but Portland said, harsh and commanding, "Let him stand until that last remark of his is explained."

"And I shall not need to stand long," blurted out McAlister, his indignation reflaming. "I have come here to tell you two what I think of you."

"Then you have come on a fool's errand. We do not care a brass farthing what you think of us. We will not give you the satisfaction of telling us what you think of us," said Portland, advancing and laying his hand on the door-knob.

"I can quite believe you do not care to hear what any honest man thinks of you, but, by the gods, you're going to hear! I did not come because I thought you cared; I came for my own satisfaction, and satisfy myself I shall, for you two have done me a gross injustice. I do not blame you for the dirty trick of sending some hireling to tell me lies about springs and quicksands under Quilter's building lot; that was the sort of trick I might expect of you. But what I resent is that you should think me too stupid to see through such a donkey plot. Why, a child could have seen through the tale pitched to me by your missionary."

He saw Bliss glance at Portland, a glance of wonder and inquiry. Portland still held the door-knob, but he did not turn it.

"Ah!" McAlister exclaimed, addressing Bliss; "you should take a lesson from your partner here in keeping your face inscrutable. You have told me by your glance that you know and are alarmed. Well you might be. And ashamed, too, if the firm of Portland and Bliss ever could be ashamed."

Portland let go the door-knob and strode over to McAlister. Speaking in a steady, bold voice, he said:—

"Give us credit for being absolutely unashamed of anything this firm has done. You have hinted at something; out with it plain. What is this something?"

"You know you sent a man to me, a Benjamin Horn?"

"I know nothing of the sort. I never heard of a Benjamin Horn."

McAlister tossed his head, as though to free himself from the falsehood told him.

"This Benjamin Horn, that you certainly did send to me, warned me not to tender for the Quilter's building. You know that!"

He paused. Bliss laughed a short laugh, exclaiming, "You're crazy." Portland turned not a hair. "Go on," he said.

"Your missionary warned me that under the land there are springs and quicksand, and that my tender would be accepted, and the foundation alone would send me to the wall financially. It was a clumsy way to keep me from tendering. It's the clumsiness I resent; and I have come here to tell you two that in future, when you want to do me an underhand action, you must call in assistance. You are not clever enough. I have the contract. I hope you paid the missionary well. It was not his fault he failed. He did his part. He acted well, but the lines given him to speak were rotten badly written. Good actor, bad play, rotten bad!"

Portland stared his inscrutable stare straight into McAlister's eyes. His jaws were clamped so tightly together that the muscles of his cheeks stood out plain as the marks of a lash. His stare seemed to pass into the very brain of his rival.

"But I am a prudent man," continued McAlister. "I knew your missionary told me lies, yet I insured against it being the truth."

"How?" asked Portland, abruptly.

"I sent for my lawyer, and before two reputable witnesses I made a statement of the whole interview. That statement I swore to just one hour before sending in my tender. Should a miracle happen, and springs or quicksand be found under that building lot, I cease work at once and prosecute——"

The telephone-bell on Portland's desk rang. Bliss, who stood nearest, snatched up the receiver. After a few moments he covered the instrument with his hand so that the caller could not hear, then said:—

"Benjamin Horn wants to know if you are here, Mr. McAlister."

"Of course I'm here, but I'll not be here long. I'm going now."

A little time and Bliss hung up the receiver.

"Horn asks you, Mr. McAlister, not to go till he arrives. He is coming on here at once." Then to Portland, "He tells me to have Mr. Quilter here at the earliest possible moment."

" QUILTER, PORTLAND, AND BLISS GAZED AT THE OLD MAN ; THEN

" Who is he, to tell us what we are to do?" flared Portland; then, checking himself, thought a moment, and added, " Ring up Quilter. If he is in his office it will take him only a couple of minutes to come across."

After this not a word passed between the three men till the arrival first of Quilter and then of Benjamin Horn.

III.

HORN came in blinking and shuffling quite as he had entered McAlister's study, and again the first thing he did was to reach for a chair and sit down, placing his hat on the floor.

" There's your man ! " proclaimed McAlister. " Now tell me you never heard of him ! Now tell me you never sent him to lie to me !"

Quilter, Portland, and Bliss gazed at the old man ; then Bliss muttered, " Never saw the old beggar before in my life."

" Let's see," said Horn, as one who would have everything in proper order. " Let me see, who are we ? Which is which ? You are Mr. McAlister, that I know. You know that I am Benjamin Horn. You also know who is who of these three "—he waved his hand to indicate Quilter, Portland, and Bliss. " Introduce me, please."

From the moment Horn entered the office McAlister had been cudgelling his brain to understand how matters now stood. When Horn appealed to him for an introduction he burst out indignantly.

" I fancy you don't need an introduction. I am satisfied you have all met before. I am satisfied you know them and they know you," said McAlister.

" You are quite mistaken," said the old man, impressively. " But I've no doubt we'll manage nicely without an introduction. He blinked at them for a time, then suddenly demanded of McAlister, " Is it a fact that, in spite of what I told you, you tendered for the Quilter building ? "

" Yes, I did, and, what is more, I got it. My tender won."

Benjamin tossed his head, clearly inferring that there are still fools in the world.

" Well, you have made a mess of things, and no mistake," he said, after a silence of a minute or more. " You have placed your neck in a financial noose, and these gentlemen will strangle you. Do you or do you not yet realize that what I told you is true, and that the laying of the foundations will bankrupt you ? "

" No, I do not. I do not believe one word of what you told me."

" Why should I go to the trouble of lying to you ? "

" I'll answer that question by asking another : Why should you go to the trouble

BLISS MUTTERED, 'NEVER SAW THE OLD BEGGAR BEFORE IN MY LIFE.'"

of telling me the truth? But if you insist on a direct answer, I say you went to the trouble of telling me a lie because the firm of Portland and Bliss paid you to do it. That's the why and the wherefore of the matter."

The old man spoke, a touch of sorrow in his tones.

"You quite mistake me—quite. I sought the interview with you in the interests of truth and fair dealings. I am sorry you failed to understand. But you did fail, and now I must try to save you from the consequences. Let me say a few words to these three." He turned to Portland, and addressed all his remarks to the silent man. "You three," he said, speaking each word with emphatic deliberation—"you three men have conspired to ruin Mr. McAlister. Let me tell you what I told McAlister."

"I have already told them," interrupted McAlister.

"Then that saves me breath. Now, sir, you know absolutely—you know, without the shadow of a doubt, that what I told Mr. McAlister is true. You three know there is a quicksand. You three met in this very office to discuss how to make the utmost use of your knowledge. You three decided that McAlister should be ruined. He was to be induced to tender, and to be given the job."

Portland, who all the time had sat with lowered brows and eyes fixed on Horn's eyes, now spoke in his sinister way.

"You are wasting your time, sir. Supposing all you have told Mr. McAlister be true, what of it? He, along with our firm, was asked to tender. We took the precaution of ascertaining the facts. We discovered the quicksand, and tendered accordingly——"

"You neither discovered the quicksand nor tendered accordingly. You are not speaking the truth, sir. Mr. Quilter had knowledge of the quicksand, and informed you after he got shares in your business. Then you did not tender 'accordingly,' but put in a tender that you knew would be slightly above Mr. McAlister's tender. That tender was put in so that it might be on record should breath of your conspiracy become public. You could then produce your tender and prove, by it being but a few pounds above McAlister's, that you had no knowledge of the quicksand."

"You are a most ingenious inventor of plausible fiction, but I very much doubt if a judge would be taken in by your concoctions. How do you intend to prove what you say?"

"The presence of the quicksand will be proof enough. But do you think that I, who have already struck fear into you—oh, you may shrug your shoulders, but you are

quaking in your boots, the whole three of you—do you think that I, who have shown you such an uncanny knowledge of your plottings and conspirings—do you think that I have not the means of proving what I say to be true? You know I have. You don't know how, but instinct tells you that I can prove all. You know in your own consciences that you are caught."

"Please allow us to be the custodians of our own consciences. And allow me again to say that if Mr. McAlister has tendered for a job without taking proper precautions——"

"Then there is quicksand under that building lot?" asked McAlister, for the first time beginning to believe.

"I have told you there is," said Horn.

"If Mr. McAlister likes to go into a job without looking ahead——" began Portland, coldly, but at this point Quilter jumped to his feet.

"I know when I am beaten," he said, brusquely. "I am beaten here and now. There is no use of us sticking our head in the sand, more particularly into a quicksand. By some means this man has become informed of much more than he has any right to know, or that we can afford him to possess. I cannot guess how he came by this knowledge, but the result is that he has passed us into the hands of Mr. McAlister. That's enough for me. I don't bluff when I know the other man holds all the cards." He sat down at the desk and rapidly wrote a note. This note he presented to McAlister. "Will you accept this as a settlement of the matter, Mr. McAlister? It is my undertaking to make good any extra expense you are put to by finding the foundation of my building more difficult to lay than you had counted on. I must say this. At the time we allowed you to tender it seemed to us, as Mr. Portland has said, that we were entitled to profit by our better knowledge. Now that the matter has been placed before me from another standpoint I am glad to rid myself of any suggestion of conspiracy. Will you accept this guarantee?"

McAlister read the paper carefully, then nodded.

"This is quite satisfactory, Mr. Quilter," he admitted.

Benjamin Horn rose, and without so much as "Good day" made out of the office.

The four men stood silent for a little before Quilter asked:—

"Who is he, Mr. McAlister?"

"I have not the least idea. Do none of you know him?"

Quilter, Portland, and Bliss shook their heads. Then McAlister took his departure.

IV.

WHEN the door-bell rang Sandy McAlister had just lighted his good-night pipe. The clock told of the near approach of eleven. As the maid had retired for the night McAlister himself opened the door and peeped out into the dark.

"Can you give me a minute or two, Mr. McAlister? I am Benjamin Horn."

"Come in," invited the builder.

In the study McAlister stared. Before him stood a man upright of figure, keen of eye, with a determined jaw, clean-shaven and unspectacled.

"I—I thought you said you were Benjamin Horn," stammered McAlister.

"I am. You find me changed? I have changed. I have discarded certain false things, beards, wigs, glasses. For I have been to work. In my business I require rapid changes."

"You certainly have made one, a most effective one," admitted the builder.

"I am leaving town to-night, but before I leave I thought you might like to know a few things. I have few minutes to spare, so shall be brief. Years and years ago I was your father's clerk. Years and years ago Bliss bribed me to make a false estimate for your father's tender for the public library building. That contract, as you know, sent your father into the Bankruptcy Court. I was the medium used by Bliss to get rid of your father's rivalry."

Horn had shoved his hands deep into his trousers-pocket, and sat far back in his chair, looking frankly at McAlister.

"Having found money easily earned by dishonesty, I took to a certain line of business. I have continued in that line, and the other week it crossed my mind that I might do a deal with my old friend Bliss. On my way to do this deal, I, two nights ago, reached the office door of Portland and Bliss, only to find a conference in progress between the firm and Quilter. So I postponed my own business and listened. That is how I came to detect the conspiracy. Of course, had they plotted to take in any other man than you, Mr. McAlister, the matter would have been no concern of mine. But I have often thought of your father, and, although conscience is not much in my line of business, I felt I must warn you."

"I am thankful you did," admitted McAlister.

"Don't mention it," said Horn, airily.

"It only delayed my business with Bliss for two nights. I have just finished that business. Do you mind me using your desk a minute?"

From his coat-pocket Horn dumped a handful of gold and notes out on the desk and carefully counted it.

"Not so much as I thought, but sixty pounds isn't so bad for a builder's safe," he muttered "Just lately business in my line has been rather flat."

"Detectives are not the only folk who can listen to some purpose and make use of what they hear."

"You told Portland you could prove that the three had conspired against me. What tangible proof have you?"

"Three consciences," answered Horn. "When you locate three consciences each guilty of the same crime, you have proof always at hand. For out of three there is always one who when the pinch comes will turn King's evidence, and the other two know this, so all three are sure to furnish you with quite enough proof to convict. That's the great difference between amateur criminals and professionals. The professionals have consciences trained not to trouble."

"FROM HIS COAT-POCKET HORN DUMPED A HANDFUL OF GOLD AND NOTES OUT ON THE DESK AND CAREFULLY COUNTED IT."

"May I ask what is your line?"

"I am a burglar."

"Dear me! How very interesting!" stammered McAlister, not knowing what else to say.

"Yes, that's the kind of missionary I am. I'm a missionary who believes in passing the plate when people are not looking. At the same time I relieve the people of the trouble of putting their hands into their pockets for the cash. I fork it out for them."

"You broke in to rob Portland and Bliss's safe, and that's how you came to overhear their conspiracy?"

"That's right," Horn cheerily admitted.

Benjamin Horn said this with obvious pride. He shoved the money back into his pocket, and without another word was gone.

Next morning the firm of Portland and Bliss reported that their safe had been blown open, and the contents, more than sixty pounds, stolen.

McAlister kept his mouth shut, and pushed ahead with the building of Quilter's factory.

SOME MEMORIES—
THEATRICAL AND OTHERWISE.

By

LAURETTE TAYLOR.

Miss Taylor has played the title-rôle in "Peg O' My Heart," written by her husband, Mr. J. J. Hartley-Manners, over one thousand four hundred times. In the following article, specially written for "The Strand Magazine," Laurette Taylor tells of her lonely childhood and her early struggles on the stage, throwing many interesting sidelights on Peg from the actress's point of view.

S a child I think my favourite heroine in fiction was Cinderella—poor, down-trodden, neglected Cinderella—for the simple reason that my childhood was, in many respects, very much like Cinderella's. I was born in New York, but, like my husband, am Irish "way back." My family were always moving, and we were very, very poor, so that, as the means to pay for a better education were denied me, I had to be sent to the public schools. And—is confession, I wonder, really good for the soul?—alas! I was always being summarily turned out of these excellent seminaries. Result—when I was expelled from one, my family had to move in order that I might be sent to another where my reputation was not so well known.

Looking back over the years, I still feel extremely sorry for myself in those days. Life was so drab, it lacked any sort of colour; but, somehow or other, hope and a generous imagination, which Nature had been good enough to leave me as a legacy, helped me to make the best of what I now realize was "a very thin time."

Yes, I owe a lot to my imagination, and as a child I used it to the full, but unfortunately to ends that were not always understood. For instance, at one of my first schools was a teacher who gave our class compositions to write. She told us to take one day out of our lives and describe what we did, from the time we got up in the morning until we went to bed at night.

I hated to write a description of one of my days. They were all exactly alike. I couldn't bring myself to confess how stupid and dull my life was. If I had told the truth I should have said that I got up in the morning and ate my breakfast, after which my sister and I washed the dishes and went to school; then we came home and ate our lunch and washed the dishes and returned to school. That we came home in the afternoon, ate again, and again washed the dishes, and went to bed. That was a true history of every day. But I couldn't write it.

Instead, I wrote that my mother was a very beautiful woman with long, coal-black hair that swept the floor; that she had been desperately infatuated early in life with a Spanish count; that she did not care for the man who was known as her husband and my father; that she grieved continually, as I did, for "Sunny Spain," and that I spoke Spanish fluently, and both of us played beautifully on the guitar.

The teacher read it, and knew it was untrue. She planned, I suspect, to trap me. So the next day, when the three best compositions were to be read aloud by the writers of them, she called out my name. She didn't think I should have the nerve to read mine. But I did. I read it with so much feeling that the first thing anyone knew I was weeping violently, the teacher herself was upset and moved, and all the sensitive children in the class were weeping with me over the sad fate of my beautiful mother, with her long, coal-black hair, hopelessly

Photo. Hoppé.

Photo. Foulsham & Banfield.

ON THE STAGE AND OFF.
MISS LAURETTE TAYLOR IN A SCENE FROM "PEG O' MY HEART," AND IN PRIVATE LIFE.

tied to one man, while she idolized and was idolized by a "grandee from Sunny Spain."

The teacher told me to stay after school, for I went back to my seat still weeping violently. She took me in her arms and said, "You really didn't mean to tell something that wasn't true, did you?" Then I wept the harder, and declared that it was all true, and I added a lot more to the story.

Of course my father and mother heard about it. My mother would have let it pass, but my father was furious. The noble Spanish rival did not appeal to him!

When I had finished school my mother thought I'd better start to do something to earn money. All the money in our family was made by mother. I said that I thought I should like to teach music, so I had music lessons. Pretty soon I decided that teaching children "one-two-three" was too dull, and I told my mother that it was dancing I thought I should like best to teach. So I had dancing lessons. They didn't know what to do with me; none of my people had ever done anything like the things I wanted to do, and as I was so strange and so unlike the rest of them they thought there must be something that I might be able to do, so that I was given opportunities that the others did not receive.

Photo. Hoppé.

Shortly afterwards I saw an advertisement for

MISS LAURETTE TAYLOR AS A HAWAIIAN PRINCESS IN "THE BIRD OF PARADISE."
From a Photograph.

supers at the Academy of Music. I joined the crowd at the stage door and waited for my measurements to be taken. The play was "Shenandoah." The next day I was told that I was accepted as a "supe," and to come back for the night performance. Of course I had to tell my parents where I was going. Then came an awful scene. I was punished in the same old way, and sent to bed. But when I got up in the morning my mind was made up for good and all. I was determined to be an actress. And I've never wavered in that determination since.

Really to make up one's mind about anything is three-quarters of the battle in any step one takes in life—at least, I think so. In my own case my determination to be an actress led me to make a start in that direction by "entertaining" in the evening. I used to give a whole evening's variety performance by myself before the Knights of Columbus and the Lady Foresters, and organizations like that. I was paid five dollars for these—sometimes more. My mother had taken my part, and it was she who stood by me. Then I grew more ambitious, and had some letter-heads printed with my picture on them. I called myself "La Belle Laurette." These I mailed to every address I knew or heard of. Finally an answer came from Gloucester, Mass., engaging me for a week at twenty-five dollars.

And that's how I got my first start on the stage. Afterwards, like the majority of actors and actresses, I experienced all sorts and kinds of vicissitudes. You see, in America we are taught to play everything. We do not crystallize into one fixed line of character, and that character our own, as I understand sometimes happens in England—or, rather, has happened now and again.

MISS LAURETTE TAYLOR IS A MISTRESS OF GRACEFUL POSES, AS THIS CHARMING PORTRAIT SHOWS.
Photo. Hoppé.

Once having succeeded in getting my foot

on the ladder which I hoped—and secretly believed—would convey me, in time, to somewhere near real success in the theatrical world, I joined various American stock companies, in which I had to play parts of every kind, from Topsy to Camille, and of every nationality—English, French, Spanish, Italian, Greek.

One of the best parts that came my way before Peg was a Hawaiian princess in "The Bird of Paradise." I had to "black up" for it, and learn the hula-hula dance, and the costume was not the latest Paris model. But, all the same, I felt amazingly proud when Mr. Bourke Cochran, the famous lawyer and orator, congratulated the manager on having "a real native" in the company.

Yes, in those days, as to-day—for I still work as hard as ever—my theatrical duties were very, very exacting. Still—it sounds trite to say it, though, doesn't it?—I love hard work; for it is my ambition, if I may so express it, to become the "Sarah Bernhardt" of to-day. For which reason one of the proudest moments of my life happened a few years ago when no less distinguished a critic than "the Divine Sarah" was kind enough to come and see me act. She afterwards graciously ventured to prophesy that "in five years' time I should be America's leading actress." If memory serves me that prophecy was made some three years ago, and only my husband and those who know me best can realize how strenuously I am studying to prove worthy of Mme. Bernhardt's confident anticipation.

Ever since I was a little girl I have been both ambitious and romantic. I remember reading as a child that French women were the most attractive of all. In consequence, in a praiseworthy endeavour to captivate the heart of some boy of approximately

MISS LAURETTE TAYLOR IN THE FIRST ACT OF "PEG O' MY HEART."

Photo. Foulsham & Banfield.

my own age—to be quite frank, I don't think in those days I should have minded what the boy's age was—I decided to cultivate a particularly *chic* and intense French accent.

How far I succeeded the following story will show. The "cultivating" part of the business led me to shrug my shoulders, work my eyes overtime, wave my arms about, and interlard my conversations with numerous "Mon Dieus" and other polite epithets. When I was behaving in this extraordinary way—for to onlookers my manner must have appeared truly extraordinary—the thought never crossed my mind that I was affected, and in consequence I continued to cultivate my French pose with such enthusiastic exuberance that before long I attracted the attention—I mistook it for admiration—I craved.

But one day I paid the price of my deceitful conceit. I was walking through the streets with a callow youth on each side when I had the misfortune to meet my father. He asked me where the key of one of the cupboards was. Clinging with misguided courage to my broken English, I replied,

"Mon Dieu, do you not know, my father? Ze key is on ze bureau." The look of astonishment on my father's face as he heard me speaking this strange "language" I shall never forget. Neither shall I forget his amazed stare as he replied, curtly, "Take that thing out of your mouth and tell me this very minute."

To keep the "bluff" up before my gallant admirers I shrugged my shoulders in a manner which I fondly believed was the last thing in "Parisienne" *chic*-ness. But the bluff failed. So did my admirers, for as I was led away to receive the parental chiding a few minutes later they both fled—never to return. It struck me there and then that there probably was not much in this pose *à la Française*. So forthwith I abandoned it.

I am purposely not referring in detail to the various different parts I played during my travels in the States, and am cutting out other dry-as-dust items which you can find in any theatrical book of reference. I feel, however, that I must refer to the part in which I am best known in England—that of Peg, which I may say is a most charming part to play; but being so definitely drawn theatre-goers may be apt to think that this is the only sort of part I can play, because there seems to exist an impression that off the stage I am, in character, so very much like what Peg is on it.

As a matter of fact, this is a very, very mistaken point of view, for I am really not a bit like Peg, who is a most practical young lady—and I'm sure I'm not.

Since I have been playing the part of Peg I have often been asked how I manage to hit off the Irish accent so successfully. Well, as I have said, although I was born in New York, my family-tree traces back to the "country which had to postpone its own troubles to help England out of hers," as a witty author has described Ireland since the outbreak of war.

This fact in itself is necessarily very helpful. But, in any case, I don't wonder that the Irish use their accent, for it seems to me that it is the most comfortable and comforting style of speaking in the world. It also seems to me that it must be easier to tell the truth in Irish-English, and make it less severe for those who have to hear it, than one could tell it in English-English. There's something really human in the Irish brogue.

Writing of Peg, that impetuous little Irish girl who seems to have made a hit in her own quiet way, reminds me that it is naturally a help to an actress who is called upon to play a youthful part if she happens to love children—for to love anyone means that one will unconsciously watch them. I simply love all children, and because I love them I find myself watching and, without knowing it, observing their mannerisms, and maybe just catching their little tricks, for like the measles tricks are very infectious. I somehow believe that the years I have spent in watching kiddies and noting the way some little girls curl up in their chairs, or lean against the banister, for instance, have helped me to portray the mannerisms of youth.

If I could do this perfectly then I know that Peg would be exactly what I want her to be. I just feel the part—that's all. But I don't act it impulsively. I act what I try to believe Peg is like, and, for the time of the play, I try to lose my identity in her. I do my humble best to feel as she might feel, and then I try to act as she would behave in the circumstances. Because I understand the Irish race, I know Peg's character well, and sympathize with it, and I try to imagine exactly what she would do if she were really alive.

Peg of the first act is a character greatly different from Peg of the second act. There is a transition between the fall of the first curtain and the rise of the second, from a shabbily-dressed, awkward, stumbling, tousle-haired Irish child holding to her dog Michael, and yearning for her shiftless father, and a clean-looking, well-gowned young woman who has learned how to talk and walk and yet has not abandoned her Irish accent.

Since first I went on the stage I have always felt a real affection for character studies, despite the fact that they entail much and real hard work in studying various types of human nature. A character actress is not obliged to depend on her good looks alone to achieve lasting success. By the same token, she is also equally well situated if she does not happen to be good-looking. And in my own case I feel a wave of gratitude coming over me when I realize that when I arrive within measurable distance of the "sere and yellow" period in life I shall not have to spend any small savings I may have amassed on face-creams, hair-renovators, or beauty doctors to repel the ravages of Time, for when I reach "Mid-Channel" I shall, I hope, slip as gracefully as well may be into old characters instead of the young ones—then no one will begrudge me the luxury of a double chin.

THE MIXER.

By
P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by
J. A. Shepherd.

LOOKING back, I always consider that my career as a dog proper really started when I was bought for the sum of half a crown by the Shy Man. That event marked the end of my puppyhood. The knowledge that I was worth actual cash to somebody filled me with a sense of new responsibilities. It sobered me. Besides, it was only after that half-crown changed hands that I went into the great world; and, however interesting life may be in an East-end public-house, it is only when you go out into the world that you really broaden your mind and begin to see things.

Within its limitations, my life had been singularly full and vivid. I was born, as I say, in a public-house in the East-end, and, however lacking a public-house may be in refinement and the true culture, it certainly provides plenty of excitement. Before I was six weeks old I had upset three policemen by getting between their legs when they came round to the side-door, thinking they had heard suspicious noises; and I can still recall the interesting sensation of being chased seventeen times round the yard with a broom-handle after a well-planned and completely successful raid on the larder. These and other happenings of a like nature soothed for a moment but could not cure the restlessness which has always been so marked a trait in my character. I have always been restless, unable to settle down in one place and anxious to get on to the next thing. This may be due to a gipsy strain in my ancestry—one of my uncles travelled with a circus—or it may be the Artistic Temperament, acquired from a grandfather who, before dying of a surfeit of paste in the property-room of the Bristol Coliseum, which he was visiting in the course of a professional tour, had an established reputation on the music-hall stage as one of Professor Pond's Performing Poodles.

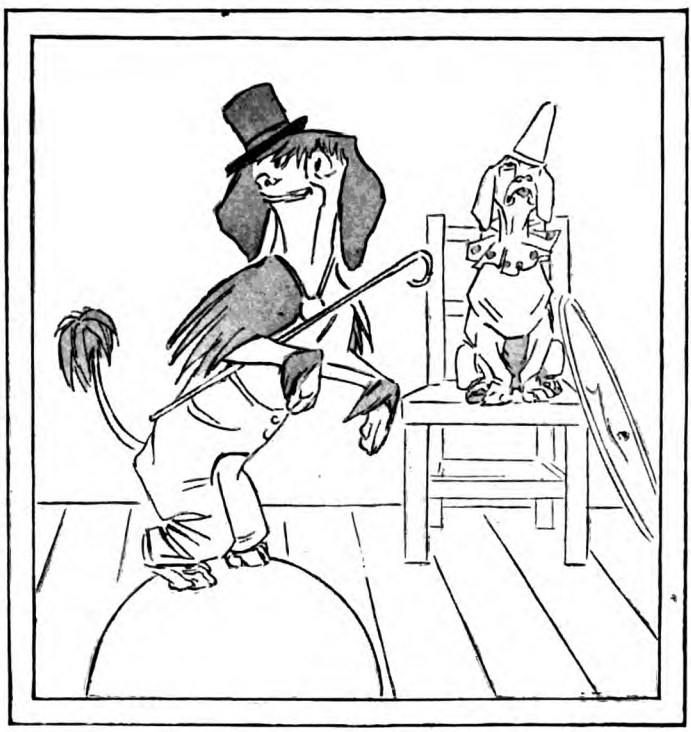
I owe the fullness and variety of my life to this restlessness of mine, for I have repeatedly left comfortable homes in order to follow some perfect stranger who looked as if he were on his way to somewhere interesting. Sometimes I think I must have cat blood in me.

The Shy Man came into the yard one afternoon in April, while I was sleeping with Mother in the sun on an old sweater which we had borrowed from Fred, one of the barmen. I heard Mother growl, but I didn't take any notice. Mother is what they call a watch-dog, and she growls at everybody except Master. At first, when she used to do it, I would get up and bark my head off, but not now. Life's too short to bark at everybody who comes into our yard. It is behind the public-house, and they keep empty bottles and things there, so people are always coming and going.

Besides, I was tired. I had had a very

busy morning, helping the men bring in a lot of cases of beer and running into the saloon to talk to Fred and generally looking after things. So I was just dozing off again, when I heard a voice say, "Well, he's ugly enough!" Then I knew that they were talking about me.

I have never disguised it from myself, and nobody has ever disguised it from me, that I am not a handsome dog. Even Mother never thought me beautiful. She was no Gladys Cooper herself, but she never hesitated to criticize my appearance. In fact, I have yet to meet anyone who did. The



"ONE OF PROFESSOR POND'S PERFORMING POODLES."

first thing strangers say about me is, "What an ugly dog!"

I don't know what I am. I have a bulldog kind of a face, but the rest of me is terrier. I have a long tail which sticks straight up in the air. My hair is wiry. My eyes are brown. I am pure white with one black eye.

When I found that I was under discussion I opened my eyes. Master was standing there, looking down at me, and by his side the Man who had just said I was ugly enough. The Man was a thin man, about the age of a barman and smaller than a policeman. He had patched brown shoes and black trousers.

"But he's got a sweet nature," said Master.

This was true, luckily for me. Mother always said, "A dog without influence or private means, if he is to make his way in the world, must have either good looks or amiability." But, according to her, I overdid it. "A dog," she used to say, "can have a good heart, without chumming with every Tom, Dick, and Harry he meets. Your behaviour is sometimes quite un-dog-like." Mother prided herself on being a one-man dog. She kept herself to herself, and wouldn't kiss anybody except Master—not even Fred.

Now, I am a mixer. I can't help it. It's my nature. I like men. I like the taste of their boots, the smell of their legs, and the sound of their voices. It may be weak of me, but a man has only to speak to me and a sort of thrill goes right down my spine and sets my tail wagging.

I wagged it now. The Man looked at me rather distantly. He didn't pat me. I suspected—what I afterwards found to be the case—that he was shy, so I jumped up at him, to put him at his ease. Mother growled again. I felt that she did not approve.

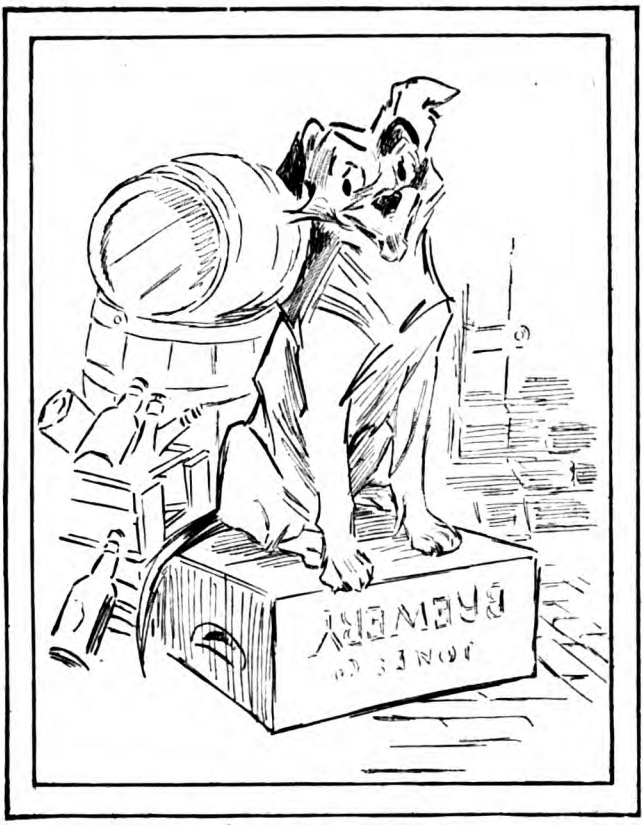
"Why, he's took quite a fancy to you already," said Master.

The Man didn't say a word. He seemed to be brooding on something. He was one of those silent men.

Master began to talk about me. It surprised me the way he praised me. I hadn't a suspicion he admired me so much. From what he said, you would have thought I had won prizes and ribbons at the Crystal Palace. But the Man didn't seem to be impressed. He kept on saying nothing.

When Master had finished telling him what a wonderful dog I was till I blushed, the Man spoke.

"Less of it," he said. "Half a crown is my bid, and if he was an angel from on



"WHAT AN UGLY DOG!"

high you couldn't get another ha'penny out of me. What about it?"

A thrill went down my spine and out at my tail, for, of course, I saw now what was happening. The Man wanted to buy me and take me away. I looked at Master hopefully.

"He's more like a son to me than a dog," said Master, sort of wistful.

"It's his face that makes you feel that way," said the Man, unsympathetically. "If you had a son, that's just how he would look. Half a crown is my offer, and I'm in a hurry."

"All right," said Master, with a sigh; "though it's giving away a valuable dog like that. Where's your half-crown?"

The Man got a bit of rope, and tied it round my neck.

I could hear Mother barking advice, and telling me to be a credit to the family, but I was too excited to listen.

"Good-bye, Mother," I said. "Good-bye, Master. Good-bye, Fred. Good-bye, everybody. I'm off to see life. The Shy Man has bought me for half a crown. Wow!"

I don't know where we went, but it was a long way. I had never been out of our street before in my life, and I didn't know the whole world was half as big as that. We walked on and on, the Man jerking at my rope whenever I wanted to stop and look at anything. He wouldn't even let me pass the time of day with the dogs we met.

When we had gone about a hundred miles, and were just going to turn in at a dark doorway, a policeman suddenly stopped the Man. I could feel by the way the Man pulled at my rope and tried to hurry on that he didn't want to speak to the policeman. The more I saw of the Man the more I saw how shy he was.

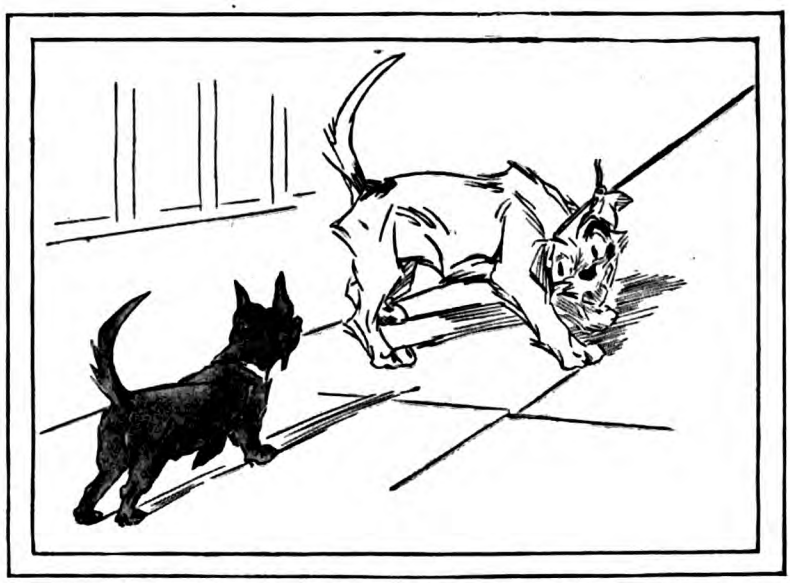
"Hi!" said the policeman, and we had to stop.

"I've got a message for you, old pal," said the policeman. "It's from the Board of Health. They told me to tell you you needed a change of air. See?"

"All right," said the Man.

"And take it as soon as you like. Else you'll find you'll get it given you. See?"

"GOOD-BYE, EVERYBODY. I'M OFF TO SEE LIFE."



"HE WOULDN'T EVEN LET ME PASS THE TIME OF DAY WITH THE DOGS WE MET."

I looked at the Man with a good deal of respect. He was evidently someone very important, if they worried so about his health.

"I'm going down to the country to-night," said the Man.

The policeman seemed pleased.

"That's a bit of luck for the country," he said. "Don't go changing your mind."

And he walked on, and we went in at the dark doorway, and climbed about a million stairs and went into a room that smelt of rats. The Man sat down and swore a little, and I sat and looked at him.

Presently I couldn't keep it in any longer.

"Do we live here?" I said. "Is it true we're going to the country? Wasn't that policeman a good sort? Don't you like policemen? I knew lots of policemen at the public-house. Are there any other dogs here? What is there for dinner? What's in that cupboard? When are you going to take me out for another run? May I go out and see if I can find a cat?"

"Stop that yelping," he said.

"When we go to the country, where shall we live? Are you going to be a caretaker at a house? Fred's father is a caretaker at a big house in Kent. I've heard Fred talk about it. You didn't meet Fred when you came to the public-house, did you? You would like Fred. I like Fred. Mother likes Fred. We all like Fred."

I was going on to tell him a lot more about Fred, who had always been one of my warmest friends, when he suddenly got hold of a stick and walloped me with it.

"You keep quiet when you're told," he said.

He really was the shyest man I had ever met. It seemed to hurt him to be spoken to. However, he was the boss, and I had to humour him, so I didn't say any more.

We went down to the country that night, just as the Man had told the policeman we would. I was all worked up, for I had heard so much about the country from Fred that I had always wanted to go there. Fred used to go off on a motor-bicycle sometimes to spend the night with his father in Kent, and once he brought back a squirrel with him, which I thought was for me to eat, but Mother said "No." "The first thing a dog has to learn," Mother used often to say, "is that the whole world wasn't created for him to eat."

It was quite dark when we got to the country, but the Man seemed to know where to go.

Every now and then we would pass a very big house, which looked as if it was empty, but I knew that there was a caretaker inside, because of Fred's father. These big houses belong to very rich people, but they don't want to live in them till the summer, so they put in caretakers, and the caretakers have a dog to keep off burglars. I wondered if that was what I had been brought here for.

"Are you going to be a caretaker?" I asked the Man.

"Shut up," he said.

So I shut up.

After we had been walking a long time we came to a cottage. A man came out. My Man seemed to know him, for he called him Bill. I was quite surprised to see that the Man was not at all shy with Bill. They seemed very friendly.

"Is that him?" said Bill, looking at me.

"Bought him this afternoon," said the Man.

"Well," said Bill, "he's ugly enough. He looks fierce. If you want a dog, he's the sort of dog you want. But what do you want one for? It seems to me it's a lot of trouble to take, when there's no need of any trouble at all. Why not do what I've wanted to do? What's wrong with just fixing the dog, same as it's always done, and walking in and helping yourself?"

"I'll tell you what's wrong," said the Man. "To start with you can't get at the dog to fix him except by day, when they let him out. At night he's shut up inside the house. And suppose you do fix him during the day, what happens then? Either the bloke gets another before night, or else he sits up all night with a gun. It isn't like as if these blokes was ordinary blokes. They're down here to look after the house. That's their job, and they don't take any chances."

It was the longest speech I had ever heard the Man make, and it seemed to impress Bill. He was quite humble.

"I didn't think of that," he said. "We'd best start in to train this tyke at once."

Mother often used to say, when I went on about wanting to go out into the world and see life, "You'll be sorry when you do. The world isn't all bones and liver." And I hadn't been living with the Man and Bill in their cottage long before I found out how right she was.

It was the Man's shyness that made all the trouble. It seemed as if he hated to be taken notice of.

It started on my very first night at the cottage. I had fallen asleep in the kitchen, tired out after all the excitement of the day and the long walks I had had, when something woke me with a start. It was somebody scratching at the window, trying to get in.

Well, I ask you, I ask any dog, what would you have done in my place? Ever since I was old enough to listen, Mother had told me over and over again what I must do in a case like this. It is the A, B, C of a dog's education. "If you are in a room, and you hear anyone trying to get in," Mother used to say, "bark first, and inquire afterwards. Dogs were made to be heard and not seen."

I lifted my head and yelled. I have a good, deep voice, due to a hound strain in my pedigree, and at the public-house, when there was a full moon, I have often had people leaning out of the windows and saying things all down the street. I took a deep breath and let it go.

"Man!" I shouted. "Bill! Man! Come quick! Here's a burglar getting in!"

Then somebody struck a light, and it was the Man himself. He had come in through the window.

He picked up a stick, and he walloped me. I couldn't understand it. I couldn't see where I had done the wrong thing. But he was the boss, so there was nothing to be said.

If you'll believe me, that same thing happened every night. Every single night! And sometimes twice or three times before morning. And every time I would bark my loudest, and the Man would strike a light and wallop me. The thing was baffling. I couldn't possibly have mistaken what Mother had said to me. She said it too often for that. Bark! Bark! Bark! It was the main plank of her whole system of education. And yet, here I was, getting walloped every night for doing it.

"'MAN!' I SHOUTED. 'BILL! MAN! COME QUICK! HERE'S A BURGLAR GETTING IN!'"

I thought it out till my head ached, and finally I got it right. I began to see that Mother's outlook was narrow. No doubt, living with a man like Master at the public-house, a man without a trace of shyness in his composition, barking was all right. But circumstances alter cases. I belonged to a man who was a mass of nerves, who got the jumps if you spoke to him. What I had to do was to forget the training I had had from Mother, sound as it no doubt was as a general thing, and to adapt myself to the needs of the particular man

who had happened to buy me. I had tried Mother's way, and all it had brought me was walloping, so now I would think for myself.

So next night, when I heard the window go, I lay there without a word, though it went against my better feelings. I didn't even growl. Someone came in and moved about in the dark with a lantern, but, though I smelt that it was the Man, I didn't ask him a single question. And presently the Man lit a light, and came over to me and gave me a pat, which was a thing he had never done before.

"Good dog!" he said. "Now you can have this."

And he let me lick the saucepan in which the dinner had been cooked.

After that, we got on fine. Whenever I heard anyone at the window, I just kept curled up and took no notice, and every time I got a bone or something good. It was easy, once you had got the hang of things.

It was about a week after that the Man took me out one morning, and we walked a long way till we turned in at some big gates, and went along a very smooth road till we came to a great house, standing all by itself in the middle of a whole lot of country. There was a big lawn in front of it, and all round there were fields and trees, and at the back a great wood.

The Man rang a bell, and the door opened and an old man came out.

"Well?" he said, not very cordially.

"I thought you might want to buy a good watch-dog," said the Man.

"Well, that's queer, you saying that," said the caretaker. "It's a coincidence. That's exactly what I do want to buy. I was just thinking of going along and trying to get one. My old dog picked up something this morning that he oughtn't to have, and he's dead, poor feller."

"Poor feller," said the Man; "found an old bone with phosphorus on it, I guess."

"What do you want for this one?"

"Five shillings."

"Is he a good watch-dog?"

"He's a grand watch-dog."

"He looks fierce enough."

"Ah!"

So the caretaker gave the Man his five shillings, and the Man went off and left me.

At first the newness of everything and the unaccustomed smells and getting to know the caretaker, who was a nice old man, prevented my missing the Man; but as the day went on and I began to realize that he had gone and would never come back I got very depressed. I pattered all over the house, whining. It was a most interesting house, bigger than I thought a house could possibly be, but it couldn't cheer me up. You may think it strange that I should pine for the Man, after all the wallopings he had given me, and it is odd, when you come to think of it. But dogs are dogs, and they are built like that. By the time it was evening I was thoroughly miserable. I found a shoe and an old clothes-brush in one of the rooms, but could eat nothing. I just sat and moped.

It's a funny thing, but it seems as if it always happened that, just when you are feeling most miserable, something nice happens. As I sat there, there came from outside the sound of a motor-bicycle, and somebody shouted.

It was dear old Fred, my old pal Fred, the best old boy that ever stepped. I recognized his voice in a second, and I was scratching at the door before the old man had time to get up out of his chair.

Well, well, well! That was a pleasant surprise! I ran five times round the lawn without stopping, and then I came back and jumped up at him.

"What are you doing here, Fred?" I said. "Is this caretaker your father? Have you seen the rabbits in the wood? How long are you going to stop? How's Mother? I like the country. Have you come all the way from the public-house? I'm living here now. Your father gave five shillings for me. That's twice as much as I was worth when I saw you last."

"Why, it's young Nigger!" That was what they called me at the public-house. "What are you doing here? Where did you get this dog, father?"

"A man sold him to me this morning. Poor old Bob got poisoned. This one ought to be just as good a watch-dog. He barks loud enough."

"He should be. His mother is the best watch-dog in London. This cheese-hound used to belong to the boss. Funny him getting down here."

We went into the house and had supper. And after supper we sat and talked. Fred was only down for the night, he said, because the boss wanted him back next day.

"And I'd sooner have my job than yours, dad," he said. "Of all the lonely places! I wonder you aren't scared of burglars."

"I've my shot-gun, and there's the dog.

I might be scared if it wasn't for him, but he kind of gives me confidence. Old Bob was the same. Dogs are a comfort in the country."

"Get many tramps here?"

"I've only seen one in two months, and that's the feller who sold me the dog here."

As they were talking about the Man I asked Fred if he knew him. They might have met at the public-house when the Man was buying me from the boss.

"You would like him," I said. "I wish you could have met."

They both looked at me.

"What's he growling at?" said Fred. "Think he heard something?"

The old man laughed.

"He wasn't growling. He was talking in his sleep. You're nervous, Fred. It comes of living in the city."

"Well, I am. I like this place in the daytime, but it gives me the pip at night. It's so quiet. How you can stand it here all the time I can't understand. Two nights of it would have me seeing things."

His father laughed.

"If you feel like that, Fred, you had better take the gun to bed with you. I shall be quite happy without it."

"I will," said Fred. "I'll take six if you've got them."

And after that they went upstairs. I had a basket in the hall, which had belonged to Bob, the dog who had got poisoned. It was a comfortable basket, but I was so excited at having met Fred again that I couldn't sleep. Besides, there was a smell of mice somewhere, and I had to move around, trying to locate it.

I was just sniffing at a place in the wall when I heard a scratching noise. At first I thought it was the mice working in a different place, but when I listened I found that the sound came from the window. Somebody was doing something to it from outside.

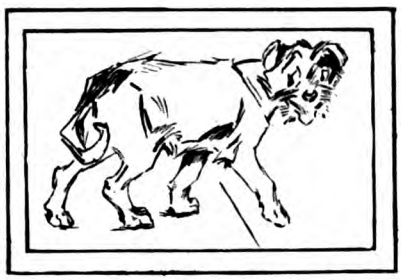
If it had been Mother, she would have lifted the roof off right there, and so should I, if it hadn't been for what the Man had taught me. I didn't think it possible that this could be the Man come back, for he had gone away and said nothing about ever seeing me again. But I didn't bark. I stopped where I was and listened. And presently the window came open, and somebody began to climb in.

"I JUST SAT AND MOPED."

I gave a good sniff, and I knew it was the Man. I was so delighted that for a moment I nearly forgot myself and shouted with joy, but I remembered in time how shy he was, and stopped myself. But I ran to him and jumped up quite quietly, and he told me to lie down. I was disappointed that he didn't seem more pleased to see me. I lay down.

It was very dark, but he had brought a lantern with him, and I could see him moving about the room, picking things up and putting them in a bag which he had brought with him. Every now and then he would stop and listen, and then he would start moving round again. He was very quick about it, but very quiet. It was plain that he didn't want Fred or his father to come down and find him.

I kept thinking about this peculiarity of his, while I watched him. I suppose, being chummy myself, I find it hard to understand that everybody else in the world isn't chummy too. Of course, my experience at the public-house had taught me that men are just



" I SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY TO STEAL SOFTLY FROM THE ROOM."

as different from each other as dogs. Some men are shy, and some are mixers. I quite appreciated that, but I couldn't help feeling that the Man carried shyness to a point where it became morbid. And he didn't give himself a chance to cure himself of it. That was the point. Imagine a man hating to meet people so much that he never visited their houses till the middle of the night, when they were in bed and asleep. It was silly.

I was fond of the Man. He was the sort of person you never got to know very well, but we had been together for quite a while, and I wouldn't have been a dog if I hadn't got attached to him.

As I sat and watched him creep about the room, it suddenly came to me that here was a chance of doing him a real good turn in spite of himself. Fred was upstairs, and Fred, as I knew by experience, was the easiest man to get along with in the world. Nobody could be shy with Fred. I felt that, if only I could bring him and the Man together, they would get along splendidly, and it would teach the Man not to be silly and avoid people. It would help to give him the confidence which he needed. I had seen him with Bill, and I knew that he could be perfectly natural and easy when he liked.

It was true that the Man might object at first, but after a while he would see that I had acted simply for his good, and would be grateful.

The difficulty was how to get Fred down without scaring the Man. I knew that if I shouted he wouldn't wait, but would be out of the window and away before Fred could get there. What I had to do was to go to Fred's room, explain the whole situation quietly to him, and ask him to come down and make himself pleasant.

The Man was far too busy to pay any attention to me. He was kneeling in a corner with his back to me, putting something in his bag. I seized the opportunity to steal softly from the room.

Fred's door was shut, and I could hear him snoring. I scratched gently, and then harder, till I heard the snores stop. He got out of bed and opened the door.

" Don't make a noise," I whispered. " Come on downstairs. I want you to meet a friend of mine."

At first he was quite peevish.

" What's the idea," he said, " coming and spoiling a man's beauty-sleep? Get out."

He actually started to go back into the room.

" No, honestly, Fred," I said; " I'm not fooling you. There *is* a man downstairs. He got in through the window. I want you to meet him. He's very shy, and I think it will do him good to have a chat with you."

" What are you whining about? " Fred began, and then broke off suddenly and listened. We could both hear the Man's footsteps as he moved about.

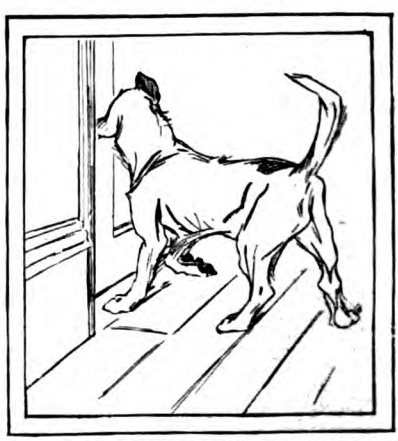
Fred jumped back into the room. He came out carrying something. He didn't say any more, but started to go downstairs, very quiet, and I went after him.

There was the Man, still putting things in his bag. I was just going to introduce Fred, when Fred, the silly ass, gave a great yell.

I could have bitten him.

" What did you want to do that for, you chump? " I said. " I told you he was shy. Now you've scared him."

He certainly had. The Man was out of the window quicker than you would have believed possible. He just flew out. I called after him that it was only Fred and me, but



" FRED'S DOOR WAS SHUT, AND I COULD HEAR HIM SNORING."

at the moment a gun went off with a tremendous bang, so he couldn't have heard me.

I was pretty sick about it. The whole thing had gone wrong. Fred seemed to have lost his head entirely. He was behaving like a perfect ass. Naturally the Man had been frightened with him carrying on in that way. I jumped out of the window, to see if I could find the Man and explain, but he was gone. Fred jumped out after me, and nearly squashed me.

"'NO, HE HASN'T!' I SHOUTED. 'HE'S UP THIS TREE.'"

It was pitch dark out there. I couldn't see a thing. But I knew the Man could not have gone far, or I should have heard him. I started to sniff round on the chance of picking up his trail. It wasn't long before I struck it.

Fred's father had come down now, and they were running about. The old man had a light. I followed the trail, and it ended at a large cedar tree not far from the house. I stood underneath it and looked up, but of course I could not see anything.

"Are you up there?" I shouted. "There's nothing to be scared at. It was only Fred. He's an old pal of mine. He works at the place where you bought me. His gun went off by accident. He won't hurt you."

There wasn't a sound. I began to think I must have made a mistake.

"He's got away," I heard Fred say to his father, and just as he said it I caught a faint sound of someone moving in the branches above me.

"No, he hasn't!" I shouted. "He's up this tree."

"I believe the dog's found him, dad!"

"Yes; he's up here. Come along and meet him."

Fred came to the foot of the tree.

"You up there," he said, "come along down."

Not a sound from the tree.

"It's all right," I explained, "he *is* up there, but he's very shy. Ask him again."

"All right," said Fred, "stay there if you want to. But I'm going to shoot off this gun into the branches just for fun."

And then the Man started to come down. As soon as he touched the ground I jumped up at him.

"This is fine!" I said. "Here's my friend Fred. You'll like him."

But it wasn't any good. They didn't get along together at all. They hardly spoke. The Man went into the house, and Fred went after him, carrying his gun. And when they got into the house it was just the same. The Man sat in one chair and Fred sat in another, and after a long time some men came in a motor-car and the Man went away with them. He didn't say good-bye to me.

When he had gone Fred and his father made a great fuss of me. I couldn't understand it. Men are so odd. The Man wasn't a bit pleased that I had brought him and Fred together, but Fred seemed as if he couldn't do enough for me for having introduced him to the Man. However, Fred's father produced some cold ham—my favourite dish—and gave me quite a lot of it, so I stopped worrying over the thing. As Mother used to say, "Don't bother your head about what doesn't concern you. The only thing a dog need concern himself with is the bill-of-fare. Eat your bun, and don't make yourself busy about other people's affairs." Mother's was in some ways a narrow outlook, but she had a great fund of sterling common sense.

"SOME COLD HAM—MY FAVOURITE DISH."

THE BOMBARDMENT OF SCARBOROUGH AND HARTLEPOOL.
OF COURSE SUCH A "VICTORY" COULD NOT PASS WITHOUT A MEDAL.

Germany's War Medals.

Commemoration of the Fall of Paris and the Great Naval Victory of Scarborough!

By SIR WHITWORTH WALLIS.

The medals here shown have been, in most cases, considerably enlarged in order to bring out the detail more clearly. The dimensions under the reproductions indicate the size of the originals.

THROUGH the good offices of a foreign correspondent the writer has been able to secure a selection of the remarkable medals which have been struck in Germany to commemorate the triumphant progress of the German armies. These medals are the work of well-known sculptors and medallists; they perpetuate in bronze, silver, and even gold the leading events of the world-war. Many of them have cost considerable sums to issue, but, notwithstanding the price, have commanded a large and ready sale. From a list which has reached me it is to be gathered that the medallists of the Fatherland have been kept fairly busy, for this little catalogue enumerates no fewer than eighty-five events, mostly "victories" over the Allies in Belgium, France, Russia, Poland, Chile, China, the Caucasus, Turkey, and East Africa. As the reader will discover, many of these medals, however dear to the hearts of the great German people, are calculated to add not a little to the gaiety of other nations. Liège, Namur, Brussels, Louvain, Tirlemont, Ostend, Dixmude, Ypres, and Nieuport are all commemorated. A medal for Maubeuge, August 21st, fixes the defeat of the

THE FIRST MEDAL STRUCK IN THE WAR.
"I KNOW NO PARTIES, ONLY GERMANS."
Diameter 1⅜ in.

THE FALL OF ANTWERP.
THE HUN AS A SAINT!
Diameter 1¼ in.

English cavalry brigades; whilst two medals testify to the destruction of the French and British armies at St. Quentin, August 28th, by Von Kluck and Von Buelow!

Popular favourites are, of course, the Emperor and Empress—one of the most eagerly purchased at the beginning of hostilities was the medal struck to commemorate the declaration of war, showing the Emperor, inscribed, "I know no parties, only Germans," and, on the reverse, a double-handed sword and inscription, "In dire necessity, with a clear conscience and clean hands, we grasp the sword." This medal is reproduced on the previous page.

The taking of Antwerp is recorded by no fewer than five medals; the most interesting shows the city with its cathedral, and the River Scheldt, on the banks of which a large German eagle, heavily crowned, is standing; whilst the reverse bears St. George and the Dragon, as shown in the above reproduction. The Teutons, for this occasion, have annexed our patron saint, and, as a compliment to Mr. Winston Churchill, Belgium and our Naval Brigade are indicated by a ferocious-looking dragon. It does not appear to have occurred to the designer that a Hun and a saint are not precisely the same thing. The destruction of Antwerp by the famous 42cm. mortars figures on one side of a medal, whilst the other bears a portrait of their inventor, Professor Dr. Rausenberger!

Rheims, Mulhouse, Luneville, Metz, Lille, Soissons are all bemedalled. The Crown Prince alone has four silver medals dedicated to his prowess as conqueror of Longwy. As this was in August of last year another medal is surely overdue. The one reproduced shows the Crown Prince wearing the uniform of the Death's Head Hussars, at the head of which regiment he expressed his determination to die. Apparently, on consideration, he changed his mind, and only let his reputation perish. On the reverse is a warrior with sword and shield, the latter bearing the German eagle, whilst across the medal runs a frieze intended to represent the Hussars in pursuit of the enemy.

Perhaps the gem of the collection is the silver medal inscribed "Nach Paris, 1914," with a portrait of General von Kluck on the face of it, on the reverse (next reproduced) a female figure on a horse, holding a torch,

IN ANTICIPATION OF THE FALL OF PARIS!
WHEN PARIS REFUSED TO FALL THIS MEDAL HAD TO BE CALLED IN.
Diameter 1⅝ in.

with a burning town below. The fool-fury holding the flaming brand possibly unconsciously delineates that Teutonic "culture" with which we are now acquainted—if so, it must be reckoned one of the happiest designs on record. As the designer, however, was also aspiring to the rank of a prophet, the medal being struck in anticipation of the triumphant entry into Paris, it somewhat missed its purpose. Paris, without any consideration for his feelings, declined to fall, and the prophet-designer got badly left.

I am told that several other medals were struck in readiness for the capture of Paris, but later they also had to be consigned to the melting-pot.

The reader must not imagine that these medals are manufactured of cheap white

Diameter 1⅝ in.

THE CROWN PRINCE AT LONGWY.
WHERE HE VOWED TO CONQUER OR TO DIE, BUT BROKE HIS WORD.

A MEDAL DEAR TO THE BABY-KILLERS.
Diameter 1¼ in.

metal, sold by itinerant street hawkers; on the contrary, they are in silver and bronze, and cost from three shillings to thirty shillings apiece. They vary in size from less than an inch to three and four inches in diameter, and of the smaller sizes many thousands have been sold.

A special medal was brought out when the elusive *Goeben* and *Breslau*, in conjunction with some Turkish destroyers, bombarded Sebastopol and Odessa, whilst the declaration of war by Turkey produces one inscribed, "Turkey enters the Holy War, November 12th, 1914."

Teutonic bravery farther East is represented by "the heroic defence of Tsing-tau against the English and Japanese." Permanent records in bronze and silver were also issued of the destruction of "the English Fleet" off Chile and the sinking of the three cruisers off the Hook of Holland, September, 1914. As the latter exploit was carried out by Captain Weddigen, large medallions over four inches in diameter were produced.

ANOTHER MEDAL TO COMMEMORATE THE FALL OF PARIS.
"WE GERMANS ONLY FEAR GOD—NOTHING ELSE IN THE WORLD."
Diameter 1¼ in.

A fine bronze medal by Lutz, here reproduced, struck during the march on Paris, shows the German eagle standing on a sword which lies across the Eastern Hemisphere, with Europe and Northern Africa, whilst on the right is a body of advancing German

A MEDAL SATIRIZING OUR INDIAN TROOPS.

Diameter 2¼ in.

troops surrounded by the words, "We Germans only fear God—nothing else in the world." On the reverse is a German infantryman holding a flag and rifle and kneeling across the body of a French soldier.

Count Zeppelin has, of course, been duly honoured. The Count's features adorn one side of a bronze medallion, whilst the reverse shows one of his huge airships dropping bombs and heavily attacking a fortified town—with the inscription, "Our Zeppelin in action in the Campaign of 1914." This is a fantastic effort of the imagination, unlike any locality so far attacked. A baby in a cradle would have been far more like the real thing.

Recently, another has been produced showing a Zeppelin bombarding the coast of England, with submarines and destroyers attacking the shores, inscribed, "England's Retribution."

There has been an enormous sale of small medals especially made for hanging on a watch-chain or as bracelets. I have been told of one man seen in a restaurant wearing no fewer than fourteen of these embellishments. They cover all the events of the war.

Size of original 3¼ in. by 2¼ in.

ANOTHER SATIRICAL MEDAL AGAINST THE ALLIES.

"THE SPREADERS OF CULTURE UNITED IN THE WORLD-WAR."

Diameter 1¾ in.

JAPAN, AS A MONKEY, ATTACKS THE GERMAN EAGLE.

The first of the baby-killing expeditions, which Mr. Balfour aptly termed that "most immoral and inglorious attack" on Scarborough and Hartlepool, is immortalized in silver, as shown at the head of this article, and a like honour is paid to the "Bombardment of English fortresses by Zeppelins" on the East Coast, presumably Sandringham and Southend. These world-famous victories, stupendous though they are, are, however, rivalled, if not surpassed, by another, commemorated as the "Defeat of the English and French Fleets in the Dardanelles,

March 18th," which furnished Germany with another outburst of jubilation. This inscription is really a masterpiece: "The Defeat of the English and French Fleets!" It is impossible to do better than that.

A considerable number of satirical medals have also been issued, some of very doubtful taste, illustrative of that coarse Teutonic humour with which we are now familiar. Due attention is paid to the Indian troops, represented as a small elephant, and our Ally, Japan, is generally disguised as a monkey. One in demand represents Germany as an oak-tree, in which stands the German eagle. From the branches of the tree hang Russian, French, and Belgian soldiers, whilst below an English soldier is assisting a Japanese—a monkey—to climb the tree. The reverse is inscribed, "Now, my little Japanese, get up the German oak and see if you can pluck a feather from the eagle's tail." Both these medals are reproduced.

A specially large medal, also shown, represents President Poincaré, with arms extended, embracing King George and the Czar, an African, a Turco, Zulu, and Japanese; the reverse inscribed, "Thus we carry culture to the uttermost parts of the earth."

That the apostle of frightfulness is popular is proved by the important representations of Von Tirpitz. The most-sought-after is the famous "Gott Strafe England" medal, here reproduced, struck to commemorate the "Blockade of England, February 18th, 1915." This is the first appearance of the famous phrase.

Such are some of the German "Victory-medals"—a few selected out of scores. Strange products of half-crazy swagger and vainglory! Yet, despite the contemptuous amusement with which an Englishman regards them, it is difficult to withhold a certain kind of admiration. The modern Hun, although not quite the lord of light and leading of his own conception, has shown himself in one respect without a rival. As a boaster he has eclipsed the fame of Bobadil and Ancient Pistol, and here stands forth, in grand supremacy, as the greatest master of braggadocio that the world has seen.

Several of these medals are now being exhibited in the Birmingham Art Gallery.

TO COMMEMORATE THE BLOCKADE OF ENGLAND!
THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF THE FAMOUS PHRASE.
Diameter 1¼ in.

"UNCLE RITCHIE."

ONE OF LIFE'S IRONIES.

By MARY TENNYSON.

Illustrated by Warwick Reynolds.

"BUT need you go so early, Mrs. Thompson?" Daphne Coulson asked, rising with the weary smile which courtesy demands should veil the hostess's desire for the departure of the visitor.

"I must, my dear," Mrs. Thompson replied. "As it is I shall scarcely get home before it is dark, and I can't bear being out alone after dusk. One does read such dreadful things in the papers."

"Allow me to relieve your mind of all such imaginary terrors, Mrs. Thompson. I shall have the greatest pleasure in seeing you home."

The voice was clear and particularly sweet, but the speaker was an old man of upright though diminutive stature, whose clothes were worn with a sprightly air which distracted attention from their shabbiness, and whose big, white moustache, well brushed but sparse hair, and cleanly-shaven, handsome chin, gave him the aspect of a military veteran, despite the extreme mildness of his bright blue eyes, from which a twinkle of benevolent humour was seldom absent.

"Now, that's very sweet of you, Mr. Ritchie," Mrs. Thompson cried, gratefully. "But I couldn't think of taking you out. See, it is already raining a little."

"Rain won't hurt me, my dear lady, and I haven't any—what do you call 'em?—chiffons or fal-lals to spoil."

"But, you know, I really don't require an escort," Mrs. Thompson continued, smiling back at him; "and I dare say you think me a very foolish woman to be nervous at my age."

"I never consider any lady foolish," Mr. Ritchie said, with old-fashioned gallantry; "and really I don't see why girls should have the monopoly of nerves. So if you'll be so good as to wait just two minutes, while I get into a thicker pair of boots, I shall be only too proud to see you safely through the perils of the road. Real perils, by the way, with these confounded motors and taxis."

Mr. Ritchie left the room briskly, and the visitor turned to Daphne and Marion Coulson with an enthusiasm of admiration in her rather prominent, unintelligent eyes.

"My dears, I am so glad I came to see you," she said, earnestly. "I feel so much more at ease about you now."

"Indeed?" Marion exclaimed.

"Well, you see, my dears," the lady went on, in some embarrassment, "I have thought of you many times since you lost your dear father three years ago. I have really been anxious about you, but somehow our paths have not converged until now. But I shall leave you with a mind quite at ease."

"But why?" Marion demanded, with a suspicion of irritation in her tone. She was out of spirits, and Mrs. Thompson was a bore, and personally almost a stranger, although she had been a friend of the family years before.

"Well, girls, I know your father left no money, dear improvident man, and I also fear that art and music are not flourishing just at present; but now that I find Mr. Ritchie is still with you I shall not worry, for even if the arts don't prosper you're all right."

"But——" said Daphne, hesitating.

"Your uncle being very well off," the lady continued.

"Our father's uncle," Marion corrected her, wearily.

"Yes, yes, of course; well, Mr. Ritchie was a help to your dear father latterly, I'm told, and no one can doubt his absolute devotion to you two girls. He's a trustee of yours, isn't he, under your aunt's will?"

"Yes," Daphne replied, gravely; "but that money was all lost; we got none of it."

"Ah, so I heard, but it wasn't Mr. Ritchie's fault, I'm quite sure. His face beams with love and sympathy every time he looks at either of you. It quite touched me."

The lips of the sisters twitched simultaneously, and Daphne emitted a short, sharp cough, which was echoed chokingly by Marion, but they feared to exchange glances, and Mr. Ritchie returning at the moment, a minute or so later the two young women watched him walk down the garden path arm in arm with Mrs. Thompson, sheltering her under a very glossy, lady-like umbrella.

"Mercy! he's actually taken my new umbrella," Marion cried. "Oh, Daphne, I do hope he'll bring it back. The handle and mounts are gold."

"Marion! surely he will."

"Well, you know, he lost your tortoiseshell opera-glasses, and father's silver pocket-flask. He never loses anything that isn't rather valuable, that's the worst of it. I shall be furious if he—we'll say *loses* my lovely umbrella. I really shall."

For an instant the faces of the sisters were gravely stern, and then their eyes lighted up, and they commenced laughing with almost hysterical violence. The Coulsons had inherited from their father a keen perception of humour, at least.

"Never mind, dear, we are safe, even if the arts do fail us," Daphne chuckled, to which Marion responded, breathlessly:—

"She really oughtn't to say dear father left us nothing. At any rate, he left us the legacy of Uncle Ritchie. Our trustee, too! A nice trustee, certainly. What could auntie have been thinking of? Daphne, I wonder if it's a fact we could put Uncle Ritchie in prison if we wished to, which God forbid."

Their countenances were grave again, and Daphne shook her head as she said, with a sigh:—

"Heaven knows. Well, Marion, since father did leave us Uncle Ritchie, we must make the best of our legacy. I really do believe he's genuinely fond of us, after all. I think he muddled that money away—at least, I hope so."

"Oh, yes; I hope so, too. He's got his good points, no doubt," Marion admitted, readily.

She seated herself, with another rather forlorn laugh, and tried to concentrate her attention on a book. She was a woman of eight-and-twenty, with an intelligent, most expressive face and a slim, graceful figure. Daphne was two years older, and was handsomer than her sister, but her face was not so strong, nor was her expression so charming in its variety. Her eyes, however, were full of unspoken sympathy now, as she glanced at Marion, and when at length the younger woman flung down the volume she held and commenced pacing the room restlessly, Daphne rose also, and, putting her hand through her sister's arm, pressed it tenderly, saying, coaxingly:—

"Talk about it, Marion dear; don't worry silently. Silent sorrows are so much the worst."

"Yes, yes, dearest, I know. But it is no good. I am very unhappy, Daphne. I think I must have been mistaken."

"No, no; I am certain he cares for you, Marion—quite certain. You are the last person in the world to be mistaken in such a case; it seems to me, as a rule, you are absolutely dense as to the admiration you excite."

"I don't care for admiration unless I return it," Marion answered; "but these American men, it is generally allowed, have delightfully courteous manners with women. I expect I have been mistaken, and the mere thought makes me hot with shame."

"You have not been mistaken in Mark Ampthill," Daphne persisted, sturdily.

"Then, why doesn't he come to say good-bye?"

"He will. He's quite sure to."

"But he starts in two days."

"You'll get a letter to-night or to-morrow morning to say he's coming."

There was a minute's silence, and then Marion said, unsteadily:—

"He knows I wouldn't go to live in America, Daphne. I told him once I could never leave England, except for a short time."

"Yes, I remember that," Daphne replied; "and I also remember that the very same evening he took an opportunity of saying to me, apparently apropos of nothing, that in some circumstances he would be more than content to take up his residence here—that he had made even a bigger success as a violinist in London than in New York."

To this Marion made no reply, and Daphne, putting her arm round her sister's neck, drew her face down and kissed her.

"I feel so sure of him," she whispered, "and I like him so well, that I am not even jealous of him, Marion."

The sisters delayed dinner for half an hour, but Uncle Ritchie did not return. And when they had finished and still he had not put in an appearance, they relapsed into a depressed silence, and at a quarter to ten, having waited for the last post, which brought them nothing of interest, Marion retired to bed. The sisters kissed again before parting. This was unusual; they were not generally demonstrative in their affection, and Marion smoothed Daphne's cheek with her rather chilly fingers.

"Don't worry about me, dear," she said, softly. "If I have made a foolish mistake I shall get over it. I am not the sort to wear the willow. I fancy I'm rather of the cold-blooded order."

But Daphne was not cold-blooded, anyway, and when her sister had gone her fair head drooped, and soon the tears were coursing

freely down her beautiful face. She was still weeping when the sound of a latch-key roused her, and, brushing away her tears, she ran out into the hall.

"IT WAS UNCLE RITCHIE, BEARING IN HIS HAND MARION'S GOLD-HANDLED UMBRELLA."

It was Uncle Ritchie, bearing in his hand Marion's gold-handled umbrella.

The relief was great, and Daphne helped the old man out of his coat and welcomed him to the fire with even more than her usual kindness.

"I had dinner with Mrs. Thompson," he explained, rubbing his thin white hands together, and stretching them towards the fire. "I do hope you two dear creatures didn't wait for me."

"Only a few minutes, uncle."

"Oh, well, the good soul pressed me so to remain, and she was evidently enjoying telling me her troubles so thoroughly, I hadn't the heart to cut her short."

"No; I can fancy how patiently you listened. But Mrs. Thompson is really a big bore, uncle."

"She is, I must admit it, poor lady. But she has her troubles, and if it's any relief for her to talk about them, I really think it's a sort of duty to listen. The worst of it is," he continued, with a twinkle in his eye, "naturally I couldn't give her any reliable advice as to the treatment of infants with croup, nor of parrots who persistently gape for no apparent reason. I couldn't suggest perhaps she wearied the unfortunate bird with her conversation, could I?"

Daphne laughed, and the legacy looked round the room.

"Marion gone to bed?" he asked.

The smile faded from Daphne's face, and the old man noted it at once.

"Nothing wrong, is there?" he said, quickly.

"Oh, no, I hope not, uncle," she answered, unsteadily. Her tears were still very near the surface.

"But there is, I am sure there is," he continued, anxiously. "My dear, you've been crying. Is Marion ill? If so, hadn't I better go for the doctor? Oh, why did you let me chatter nonsense when you were in trouble?"

His ready sympathy soothed and comforted Daphne. There was no doubt about it. There was a quality in Uncle Ritchie which seemed to draw people's troubles from them, sometimes despite their better judgment, and for an hour past Daphne had felt lonely and curiously depressed.

"Marion is not ill, uncle, really," she said, looking wistfully into the alert, kindly old eyes, "but I'm afraid she's unhappy."

"Unhappy!" he exclaimed. "But, my dear, that's worse. Unhappy about what?"

Daphne hesitated, and then her eyes brimmed over, and she put her handkerchief hastily to them.

"I don't know whether I ought to tell you," she faltered. "Marion is so reticent about such things."

Mr. Ritchie did not speak; he only looked searchingly at her, and after a moment's pause she continued:—

"Uncle, I can't understand Mr. Ampthill."

"Can't understand him?"

"He is going back to America the day after to-morrow," Daphne explained.

"Yes; I saw that in the paper."

"Well, it'll be very strange if he goes without saying good-bye to—to—us."

"Will it?" Mr. Ritchie asked, abruptly.

"Certainly it will. He has seen a great deal of Marion at different concerts this autumn, you know, and——"

There was a long pause, during which the old man studied her face intently through narrowed lids, and then he said:—

"Am I to understand there's anything between Ampthill and Marion, my dear?"

Daphne's cheeks flushed hotly.

"I don't know whether I ought to say so, uncle, but at any rate I feel sure, quite sure, he cares for her, and naturally it—well, I must say it surprises me that he should leave without saying good-bye."

Uncle Ritchie pursed his thin lips under his military moustache, and stroked his thin nose thoughtfully with his forefinger.

"But there's to-morrow," he said at last. "He may come to-morrow."

"That's true," Daphne replied, more hopefully. "There may be a letter from him to-morrow morning. Oh, uncle, I wouldn't own as much to anyone but you, and even to you it seems almost like disloyalty to Marion, but I do pray there may be a letter from him to-morrow morning."

"But are her feelings so much engaged, then?" he asked, gently.

"I oughtn't to say so, perhaps," Daphne responded, much agitated, "for, indeed, I don't know for certain; but I'm afraid they are."

"And is he bound to write?" Mr. Ritchie inquired. "Mightn't he come without?"

"No; I should say certainly not," Daphne replied. "He knows how much Marion is out. Indeed, as he also is very busy, it has been an arrangement that he should always write before he came in case we missed. It is a long way out to Pinner, you see."

"He may have forgotten to write on this occasion," the old man remarked, thoughtfully.

"That's not at all likely," Daphne retorted, quickly. "He's much too business-like to forget anything."

Uncle Ritchie winced, almost imperceptibly, and again his round eyes narrowed suddenly.

"Business-like, is he?"

"Yes, curiously business-like for a musician, I'm told. He has not forgotten, uncle, so I pray there may be a letter from him to-morrow morning, for he won't come without, I'm sure."

"I hope there may be, then, with all my heart," Uncle Ritchie cried, warmly. "And now, dear girl, go to bed and try to sleep. Never meet troubles half way, Daphne. Besides, you know, it isn't quite fair to Marion, if the worst happens, to force upon her the position of having been jilted. I'm sure she wouldn't wish that."

"Oh, no, no, indeed she wouldn't."

"Very well, then, my dear, you must be careful. Don't let her catch you crying, or anything of that sort. But we'll hope for the best, and I think the best will come about."

He kissed his niece, and patted her shoulder encouragingly, and then they parted for the night. But Mr. Ritchie having gained his room, made no attempt to go to bed, nor did he even light his gas. Groping his way to his easy chair, he sat gazing out of the window into the blackness of the night, with his strong jaw clenched, stroking his nose with his forefinger.

Presently he stirred, and began to mutter thickly through his teeth.

"When either of them marries I may get into the devil of a mess. I've always been afraid of that. Their father accepted my explanations about the money—he was a fool in that respect — but a young husband mightn't. And this chap is business-like, confound him. The girls would stand between me and prison if they had the power, but I doubt if they would have if the law were set going. Besides, if either of them marries, the other is bound to go and live with her sister, and then where should I come in? Yes, I'll set the alarum to seven in case of accidents. I'm a bit tired to-night, and I might oversleep myself. I wish I knew the fellow's writing. I may have a bother over that."

At half-past seven, shaven and fresh, Mr. Ritchie came briskly downstairs. He first went into the tiny room devoted to Marion, in which she wrote her letters and received her business callers and musical agents, and, stooping, pulled out the lower drawer of the leather-covered writing-table. At the back of the drawer was a sealed envelope, containing the old gentleman's pocket-money for the week, and, placing it in his pocket, he took his garden hat from the stand, and, going out into the early sunlight, proceeded to busy himself in tidying-up the little flower-border, whistling softly in rather a toothless fashion as he worked.

At a quarter to eight he heard the postman in the distance. Then he straightened his back, first glancing warily at the lowered blinds in Marion's room, and went to the gate, and, leaning his elbows on the top bar, awaited the coming of the man, blinking his bright blue eyes in the glare of the sun.

He received the little packet of letters, and then, with another furtive glance around, retreated into the porch and turned them over in his trembling hand. At length he came to a post-card addressed to Marion, and at sight of the signature he drew in his breath involuntarily.

Hastily he thrust the card into his side-pocket, and scarcely had he concealed it when Daphne, in dressing-gown and slippers, appeared on the stairs.

"I heard the postman next door," she whispered, anxiously. "Are there any letters?"

With a shake of the head, Uncle Ritchie handed the little packet to her.

"Nothing satisfactory, I fear," he answered. "A newspaper for me, a letter from the concert bureau; the other two look like women."

Daphne stifled a sob, and without a word went back, and he, waiting to hear her door close, crept up the stairs, and regaining his room turned the key softly in the lock.

Then he took the post-card from his pocket, and putting on his gold-rimmed spectacles, his last Christmas present from the sisters, went to the window. He read as follows:—

"Eleven-twenty p.m. Please forgive post-card. Can't lay my hand on a sheet of note-paper. Meant to have sent a wire and come over this evening, but got a sudden command to play at the Duke's before Royalty. Am distracted with business, but *must* see you. Pray be at home to-morrow at 3.30. I have to leave for Liverpool at 8.30 instead of the next morning. Wire me if you can't see me, but pray make an effort.—Yours very sincerely, MARK AMPTHILL."

The old man's hands began to shake, and the post-card fell from them, but in a moment he recovered his composure, and, picking it up, made a mental note of its contents, and carefully tore it into minute fragments. He put the pieces into the waste-paper basket, and then he washed his hands and proceeded downstairs to breakfast.

Marion did not come to the meal, having, Daphne said, a headache, and uncle and niece ate and drank in almost complete silence; but the old man's face glowed with unspoken sympathy, and the ready tears rose in Daphne's eyes as he patted her hand when she passed him his cup of coffee.

Directly breakfast was ended he took his hat and went out, and Daphne perceived in this yet another instance of his delicate tact. As a rule, Mr. Ritchie was rather inclined to monopolize the morning paper, but on this particular day it was evident he realized that the sisters would prefer to be alone.

Marion was glad to find him absent when she came down, for it gave her time to pull herself together before encountering other eyes than those of Daphne, and she had schooled herself into at least an outward appearance of calm when, five minutes before the luncheon-hour at half-past one, Uncle Ritchie was seen hurrying up the little garden path, dabbing his pink, heated face.

He greeted Marion in exactly the right manner, was kind and interested in her headache, but averted his eyes quickly from her pale, wan face, and turned to Daphne.

"I have just been over to Mrs. Thompson's," he explained. "I've had a rush to get back."

"Good gracious, uncle!" Daphne cried, with assumed cheeriness. "What on earth made you go there again this morning?"

"Not to ask after the parrot, you may be sure of that, my dear. By the way, the bird had its beak wide agape all the time I was there to-day. It looks deucedly like getting fixed, and poor Mrs. Thompson doesn't see the comic side at all—perhaps naturally."

A wintry smile appeared on Daphne's face, reflected faintly on that of Marion. It was not so much the quality of Uncle Ritchie's remarks as his quaintly humorous method of delivery that appealed, and always had appealed, to the Coulsons; moreover, in this case, it was evident the old man was making a tactful effort to dispel the prevailing gloom.

"No," he continued; "this was my object in going. Mrs. Thompson offered me yesterday a couple of tickets for the chrysanthemum show at the Botanical, and forgot to give them to me. Well, it was such a lovely morning, I thought you two dear girls might be the better for the little change. Now, do use them; I believe it is a most lovely sight."

Again Daphne's eyes grew moist.

"Ah, uncle, how kind of you," she faltered, gratefully; "but I am afraid Marion hardly feels inclined."

She looked hesitatingly at her sister, and Marion's pale face flushed crimson. For a moment she was silent, and then she said, in strained tones, that sounded curiously unfamiliar to her listeners:—

"I should like to go very much. It will do my head good to get out into the air. It was very kind of you, uncle, to take all that trouble to give us pleasure. I quite appreciate it."

In half an hour the sisters started, the old man escorting them to the station, and then he returned to the house, his brows puckered with thought, and meeting the servant in the hall stopped her.

"It is a most lovely afternoon, Emma," he said, kindly, "quite like summer."

"Yes, indeed, sir," she replied, rather wistfully.

"We sha'n't get much more of it, Emma; by the way, I dare say you'd like to have a walk."

"Yes, I should, sir; but——"

"Well, then, my girl, be off with you. It's only half-past two now. If you are in by five to get me my tea, that'll be all right. Your mistresses are going to have tea in town."

"Oh, but are you sure you don't mind, sir?" the girl cried, excitedly. "I should just love to walk over to the farm and see mother."

"Then go. You young things are all the better for a bit of sunshine. I'll take care of the house."

Ten minutes later Emma also took her departure, and Mr. Ritchie, heaving a sigh of profound relief, and dabbing a few beads of moisture from his brow, settled himself in an easy chair, and proceeded to study the news of the day.

For an hour he read, and then, stretching and yawning, he got up, and taking his hat, once more went out into the garden, and resumed his tidying-up and his rather toothless whistling. Presently he heard a man's hurried tread on the footpath outside, and then the wooden gate was pushed open, and he raised his bent head.

"Mr. Ampthill!" he exclaimed. "This is an unexpected pleasure."

"Unexpected?"

"Why, yes, certainly. And really I can truly say I am sorry to see you."

"Sorry?" Ampthill repeated again.

"Yes, because I know how busy you must be, and, unfortunately, both the girls have gone up to town."

Ampthill's swarthy cheek flushed with annoyance and bitter disappointment.

"I sent a card to say I was coming," he said. "Surely Miss Marion received it."

"I think not," Mr. Ritchie replied. "In that case she would probably have stayed at home."

"Perhaps she was obliged to go?" Ampthill suggested.

"Well, no, I can scarcely say that. In fact, you must blame me indirectly for her absence."

"How?" was the quick inquiry.

"I gave the girls tickets for the flower show," Mr. Ritchie explained, "and I'm very, very sorry I did now. They won't be home till late in the evening."

The young man looked in the sympathetic old face, and the frown on his brow relaxed a little.

"Mr. Ritchie," he said, "can you spare me a few minutes?"

"Why, of course I can. Come in. I can't offer you tea, unfortunately. I've sent the maid out to bask in the sun."

"She seemed to me to be looking a bit off colour," he rattled on, as they entered. "That's the up-to-date method of describing an anæmic condition, I believe. Now sit down, and tell me what I can do for you."

For a moment Mark Ampthill did not answer, and then, leaning his elbow on the table, and shading his eyes with his fine strong hand, he said, with a slight tremor in his voice:—

"Mr. Ritchie, I suppose you are in the confidence of your nieces?"

"Why, yes, certainly; at any rate in matters of importance."

"Do you think Miss Marion did receive my card?"

"Ah, that I couldn't say. In minor details Marion is not nearly so communicative as Daphne."

"In minor details?" Ampthill repeated, once more. "Yes, of course, it was a minor detail."

"Naturally," Mr. Ritchie agreed, with a smile.

There was a long pause, and then the musician rose and, walking to the window, stood with averted head.

"I am going to ask you a strange question, Mr. Ritchie, but I beg you'll answer me frankly."

"I will. You seem worried. I should be very glad to be of service to you."

"Can you tell me if—Miss Marion—has—any—any—attachment?"

"To a man, do you mean?"

"Yes, that is what I do mean," he replied, hoarsely.

There was another long pause before the old man said, with an obvious effort:—

"I am sorry, deeply sorry, but I'm afraid I must tell you she has."

Ampthill caught his breath.

"Is she engaged?"

"Well, I couldn't say she's actually engaged, though I fancy it's been an understood thing between them for some years."

There was complete silence for a minute, and then Ampthill, moving to the table, took up his hat.

"I have been badly treated in this matter, Mr. Ritchie," he said, harshly, his brown eyes blazing with angry mortification. "I have been cruelly deceived. I am glad now not to have seen your niece. Probably she has gone out to avoid me. I must beg you, sir, to do me a great favour."

"Anything, anything I can do," the other replied, deprecatingly; "but I think you are in error with respect to Marion, really——"

"Then do not tell her of this conversation of ours," Ampthill interrupted. "Let her think I came to say good-bye to an ordinary acquaintance. I am a proud man, you see. I will write her a few words in that spirit."

"And you leave England to-morrow?" Mr. Ritchie said, retaining his hand to press it warmly.

"Yes, to-morrow."

"And when shall we have the privilege of welcoming you back?"

"Never," was the quick response. "I have seen enough of England and English people. Good-bye. I can rely upon your silence, I'm sure."

When the sisters returned they found that Uncle Ritchie, having had a high tea, and being tired with his gardening operations, had gone quite early to bed, and they were alone when two letters reached them by the last post. Marion opened hers with shaking fingers, and then started painfully. The sheet contained but a dozen lines:—

"DEAR MISS COULSON,—This is to bid you and your sister good-bye. I was sorry not to see you both before starting, but it's good to feel one's face turned towards home. I hope we may meet again some day, but that will probably be if ever you pay a visit to the States. I don't expect to be in England again for a long while. With kind regards to you both, yours faithfully, MARK AMPTHILL."

Marion read the letter, and then passed it to Daphne.

"You see," she said, with a tremor in her voice, and a dry glitter in her eyes, "I did make a mistake."

"I can't understand it, I can't understand it," Daphne cried, in great distress.

"'I HAVE BEEN BADLY TREATED IN THIS MATTER, MR. RITCHIE,' HE SAID, HARSHLY. 'I HAVE BEEN CRUELLY DECEIVED.'"

"Don't try, Daphne; help me to forget—to forget it altogether. Who's your letter from?"

"Oh, some idiotic nonsense of Mrs. Thompson's."

"Read it."

"Oh, dearest, I can't."

"Read it," Marion repeated, almost harshly. "Idiotic nonsense might be soothing."

"DEAR DAPHNE," Daphne read, "I must just send a line to tell you how perfectly sweet Mr. Ritchie was this morning. He is actually devoted to both of you. I was so glad to be able to give him those tickets. I do hope you enjoyed the show. And what a clever old man he is. Tell him I am trying the tying-up of my poor parrot's beak with tape, as he advised, and I fancy it may answer.

"'OH, MAKE IT THIRTY SHILLINGS, MARK. HE'S ALWAYS BEEN USED TO COMFORTS, POOR OLD MAN, AND I'M SURE HE'S SORRY,' PLEADED DAPHNE."

But I can only keep it on for a little while at a time, as the poor thing's eyes seem to become so prominent and wild when the beak is shut. By the way, I must tell you Mr. Ritchie wrote his name in my Scriptural birthday book, and what do you think was his quotation—'He shall feed his flock.' Isn't it beautifully appropriate?"

Daphne read no farther, for Marion suddenly broke into an uncontrollable paroxysm of harsh, strident laughter. For a minute her unnatural merriment continued, and then there came a rush of blessed, healing tears to the hard, strained eyes.

"Oh, Daphne," she sobbed, stretching out her arms, "thank Heaven I have you left."

And then she rose, and stumbling to the door, put out her hand in silent protest against her sister following her. Reaching her room, she locked it, and then she fell face downwards on the bed.

Once more Daphne Coulson abandoned herself to her grief. Her heart was torn for Marion, and she was utterly bewildered at what appeared the extraordinary conduct of Mark Ampthill. She was still racking her brains, when she felt a timid touch upon her arm, and raising her tear-stained face, saw the maid Emma standing beside her. Turning away, she pressed her handkerchief to her eyes.

"What do you want, Emma?" she inquired, unsteadily.

"Oh, Miss Daphne," the girl replied, in great agitation, "I must speak; but I've never done such a thing before. I really never have."

"Emma, what have you done?"

"Well, miss, this is how it was. Mr. Ritchie, he give me leave to go and see mother, and I went, but I come home rather soon, because mother was out, and just as I come round the corner I see Mr. Ritchie letting Mr. Ampthill out of the garden——"

"Emma! This afternoon?"

"Yes, about four, miss."

"Good heavens!'

"That's not all, miss. Oh, Miss Daphne, you will forgive me, won't you? But I found this in Mr. Ritchie's waste-paper basket, and I put it together. The heroine did that in the tale I'm reading, and I thought I'd try whether I could."

And then Emma, with an expression of mingled pride and contrition, brought forward a dinner-plate, on which was displayed, formed out like a puzzle, Mark Ampthill's post-card.

"I heard Miss Marion a-crying just now," the girl continued, "and I couldn't keep silent no longer."

Daphne read the post-card, and sprang to her feet with flashing eyes.

"What's the time?" she cried. "A quarter-past nine! Get me my hat—quick, quick!"

In a minute she was out of the house and racing to the station. She had known the clerk in the booking-office for years, and she consulted him.

Mark Ampthill's ship, the *Syren*, was to leave the Liverpool docks at seven o'clock the next morning, but at eleven that night he received a telegram: "Come back. A mistake somewhere. Come back. I want you. —DAPHNE COULSON."

The following evening the sisters and Mark Ampthill discussed the future of Uncle Ritchie.

"You'll live with us—that goes without saying, Daphne," Ampthill cried, cordially. "But I won't have that old brute under my roof-tree."

"You see, Mark, he *says* the post-card got into the folds of his newspaper," Daphne faltered, deprecatingly, "and that he didn't find it until too late, and then was afraid."

"Oh, that's all confounded rot. How about that love affair of Marion's?"

"Well, I certainly cannot understand that. He declares he fancied Marion cared for Cousin George, but that's too ridiculous. We haven't seen or heard from George for more than ten years. I'm afraid Uncle Ritchie's brain is not what it was."

"Oh, come, Daphne, that won't do. Uncle Ritchie is a wrong'un, but he's as sharp as a needle. I'll let him off his deserts about the trustee-ship, but that's as much as I'll do."

"But Mark, dearest, we can't let him starve," Marion interposed. "We are so happy ourselves. We——"

"No, my darling, we'll allow him a pound a week."

"Oh, make it thirty shillings, Mark. He's always been used to comforts, poor old man, and I'm sure he's sorry," pleaded Daphne.

Ampthill raised his hands in astonishment.

"You women really are extraordinary creatures. Make it what you like, my dears, so long as he doesn't come in my way. It's difficult to keep my hands off the old ruffian."

"On thirty shillings a week he might live quite near Mrs. Thompson," Daphne said, thoughtfully, "and then, Marion, he'd be near at hand if the parrot had another attack."

ORIGINALITY IN MURDER.

By GEORGE R. SIMS.

Illustrated by Frank Gillett, R.I.

II.

WHEN in last month's number of THE STRAND MAGAZINE I told the story of certain crimes in which the element of originality had been more or less marked, I expressed the opinion that originality was more often displayed by murderers in the manner in which they accomplished their deed than in the selection of the means of accomplishing it. But it has sometimes happened that when originality has been displayed in the means of murder a lack of originality in carrying out the details has brought the well-laid scheme to disaster.

There are two cases connected with the use of coal-gas which are interesting. In one it was used to divert suspicion as to the actual cause of death; in the other it was the direct agent of the crime.

The one case occurred in Edinburgh and the other at Tirlemont, in Belgium, and in both the nefarious scheme was planned on somewhat original lines.

Eugène Chantrelle, a professor of French in Edinburgh, who at one time had been French tutor to Queen Victoria's second son, then known as Prince Alfred, had conceived the idea of murdering his wife in such a way as to make the unfortunate lady's death appear to be the result of accidental poisoning by an escape of gas in the bedroom she occupied.

In October, 1877, Chantrelle, who was not living very happily with his young wife, insured her life for a thousand pounds. He was hard up at the time, but he paid the first premium cheerfully. It was only a small one, as the insurance was against death by accident only.

Three months later his wife was a dead woman and he was entitled to receive from the company the amount for which he had insured her. He had carried out his original idea. He had poisoned his wife with opium, and, when she was in a senseless condition and dying, he had arranged that there should be evidence to justify the supposition that his victim had died of accidental gas-poisoning.

Chantrelle had studied medicine, and thought he had discovered a way to commit his crime in a manner that would make it impossible for a charge of murder to be brought against him.

He knew that opium was absorbed in the system and that it is very rarely any trace of it can be found in the body of the victim.

On New Year's Day, 1878, Mrs. Chantrelle had promised the servant, Mary Byrne, that she should go out for the evening, and she allowed the girl to go, but asked her to be back by ten o'clock. Mrs. Chantrelle was not very well. She had a headache, and there were two children and a baby to look after.

New Year's Eve had been celebrated in the Chantrelle family with a cake and shortbread and a bottle of champagne, and perhaps the champagne or what was in it had something to do with the headache.

At any rate, on New Year's night Mrs. Chantrelle's headache grew rapidly worse and she went to bed early, so that when the servant came back it was the master who let her in.

The girl went up to her mistress's bedroom and found her very "heavy looking." The maid noticed that on a small table by the bedside there was a tumbler of lemonade three parts full and an orange. She was asked to peel the orange for her mistress and did so. Breaking it into four parts and giving her mistress one, she put the others on the plate and went to bed.

In the morning she was in the kitchen

"WHEN THE GIRL CAME BACK INTO THE ROOM SHE SAW HER MASTER COMING HURRIEDLY FROM THE WINDOW."

lighting the fire when she heard a moaning sound which seemed to come from her mistress's room.

She went to the room and found Mrs. Chantrelle lying on her side with her eyes closed and moaning heavily. Her face was deadly pale, and where her lips touched the pillow-case there were two brown stains.

The maid went into Mr. Chantrelle's room, found him asleep, and roused him. He got up hurriedly, came to his wife's bedside, took her hand, and spoke to her.

Suddenly he lifted his head and exclaimed, "Hark! I hear one of the children crying. Go and see to it." The girl had not heard the cry, but she obeyed her instructions, only to find that the three children were sleeping quietly.

When the girl came back into the room she saw her master coming hurriedly from the window. She thought he must have been trying to open it, because the dressing-table which stood in front of it had been pulled a little way into the room.

When the girl entered Mr. Chantrelle said, "Mary, do you smell gas?" and then for the first time the girl noticed there was a smell of gas in the room. Chantrelle then told the girl to go and turn the gas off at the meter. She went downstairs and did so, and then Chantrelle went out to fetch a doctor.

When he brought the doctor back he had already explained his theory of the cause of the wife's condition. She was suffering from gas-poisoning.

The meter was turned on by Chantrelle's direction. The doctor at once smelt the gas and, concluding that there was a leakage in the room, he decided that the condition of the patient was consistent with coal-gas poisoning.

He sent a message to Dr. Littlejohn, the medical officer for the city. "If you would like to see a case of coal-gas poisoning come to 81A, George Street."

Dr. Littlejohn, when he arrived, was not satisfied. He knew what the symptoms of coal-gas poisoning would be, and they were not present. He at once came to the conclusion that the case was one of narcotic poisoning, probably through opium or morphia.

Mrs. Chantrelle was taken away to the Royal Infirmary, where she died that afternoon.

If the husband's theory of gas-poisoning could be borne out he was entitled to one thousand pounds, as death caused by an escape of gas would be death by accident. But the post-mortem examination which was made on the following day did not reveal a single symptom of gas-poisoning. At the same time, nothing was found to support the theory that the lady had died through the administration of either opium or morphia.

But there were brown stains on the pillow, stains which had undoubtedly been caused by something ejected by the sufferer. When these ejections were analyzed they were found to contain orange pulp with which opium had been mixed. The same brown stains were found upon the victim's night-dress, and chemical analysis again revealed the presence of opium.

Eugène Marie Chantrelle, professor of languages, was arrested and put upon his trial for murder, and at the trial it was conclusively proved that the escape of gas had been deliberately brought about by his own act. Behind the shutters of the window ran a gas-pipe connected with which at one time there had been a bracket. This bracket had been removed and the pipe securely closed up. Chantrelle had wrenched this pipe a little way out and broken it in such a way as to allow the gas to escape into the room.

A certain amount of opium and a treatise on poisons were found by the police when they searched the professor's rooms in George Street.

The originality of the murderer's scheme did not save him from the gallows. The opium he had administered had been absorbed in the victim's system, as he anticipated it would be, but he omitted to take note of the brown stains on the pillow-case, and those two small brown stains put "Paid" to his account.

The coal-gas poisoning idea was carried out in a much cleverer way in Belgium in 1892.

One evening in the month of December, 1891, two sisters, Jeanne and Lucie von Rossum, work-girls of a superior kind, were strolling along a boulevard in Brussels. Presently they noticed that two well-dressed men were following them.

The men approached the girls and very politely invited them to take a cup of coffee at a neighbouring *café*, and after some hesitation the girls consented.

In the *café* the men explained that they were strangers in Brussels. One of them was M. Amos Schmidt, a rich widower, who was feeling his loneliness very much and was anxious to marry again. The younger man, Dehavaliere, known as M. Lebauhie, was his friend.

"LUCIE VON ROSSUM WAS STILL ASLEEP, BUT SHE WAS IN A SLEEP FROM WHICH SHE WOULD NEVER WAKE AGAIN."

Before they left the *café* M. Amos Schmidt had proposed marriage to the younger sister, Jeanne, who had only laughed at him. Then he proposed to the elder sister, Lucie, who, after listening to a glowing account of his wealth and position and the beautiful home that was waiting for a new mistress, accepted him.

The proposal made by Amos Schmidt was really a proposal not of marriage but of murder. Schmidt and his friend Lebauhie had before accosting the two girls conceived the idea of a crime which they intended to carry out on quite original lines.

Lebauhie had explained to Lucie von Rossum that M. Amos Schmidt was so determined to secure the position of the woman he married that he had arranged to insure her life for a large sum of money in her favour.

It was eventually arranged that Lucie should leave Brussels the next day with her *fiancé* and his friend in order to see the beautiful home which was presently to be hers.

But M. Schmidt did not remain in Brussels to conduct his *fiancée* to his property. He left his friend Lebauhie to escort her while he himself went to Liège, where he purchased a small portable smokeless stove, such as is used on the Continent for heating a room. He put this stove in an apartment which he had taken and partly furnished in the town.

Lucie arrived at Liège, and there the preliminaries of the marriage settlement were discussed. M. Schmidt said that he had already insured his own life as he had promised, but what he proposed to Lucie was that she should be insured for a hundred thousand francs to be paid to her when she reached the age of fifty-two. In the event of her predeceasing her husband the money was to go to him.

Lucie agreed. Schmidt at once made a proposal to a London insurance company, the Gresham, and Lucie was after a short delay insured for forty thousand francs on the terms suggested by Schmidt. It was represented to the insurance company that this was a pre-nuptial arrangement which had been insisted upon by the lady before she married her *fiancé*. The first premium was paid on January 7th, 1892.

In the meantime Schmidt, Lebauhie, and Lucie had proceeded to Tirlemont, where they had put up at the Hôtel de Flandre. Schmidt at once sent to Liège for his newly-purchased stove, and with a lover's forethought had it placed in his *fiancée's* bedroom.

The 13th of January was the young woman's birthday. There had been considerable delay in fixing up the wedding, but M. Schmidt determined that Lucie's birthday should be duly honoured, so he ordered the landlord of the hotel to prepare a banquet; and to this banquet he invited a certain number of people whose acquaintance he had made in the neighbourhood, and that evening there was quite a merry party at the hotel.

The merriness lasted far into the night, and at half-past two in the morning Lucie, who had been drinking champagne, a form of liquid refreshment to which she was utterly unaccustomed, was decidedly intoxicated. She had been plied with wine by her *fiancé* and had become heavy and stupid. Schmidt helped her up the stairs to her room, and presently came down again.

A little later the faithful Lebauhie went upstairs to see if Lucie was all right. He remained upstairs for some time. When he came down again the company had departed and he and Schmidt had the remains of the banquet to themselves. They sat at the table smoking and chatting till seven o'clock in the morning.

At noon the next day someone went upstairs to Lucie's room to inquire if she was all right and if she was going to get up. There was no answer and the room was entered.

Lucie von Rossum was still asleep, but she was in a sleep from which she would never wake again. She was cold and dead.

A local doctor was summoned at once. He heard the story of the banquet, he interviewed the landlord and several of the guests who had been present, and he came to the conclusion that death was due to cerebral congestion caused by over-indulgence in alcohol. He gave a certificate, and Amos Schmidt and his friend followed the bride, as she was to have been, to her grave.

Directly afterwards Lebauhie left for London, but M. Schmidt remained in Belgium to receive the insurance money, a claim for which had at once been made upon the Gresham.

But the Gresham did not like the look of things and communicated with the Belgian authorities, with the result that the body of Lucie von Rossum was exhumed. The doctor who made a scientific examination of the remains discovered that the young woman had died from the effects of carbonic oxide, which is the poisonous agent in coal-gas. Certain evidence having been obtained, a warrant was issued for the arrest of Schmidt and his friend Lebauhie on a charge of murder.

That murder had been accomplished with the little stove which had been so thoughtfully placed in Lucie's bedroom by her betrothed. The girl had been suffocated with its fumes through the action of Schmidt, and after she had succumbed the confederate, Lebauhie, had opened the windows, and thus destroyed all evidence of the manner in which the victim had been done to death.

The original idea in this case was much more cleverly carried out than in the Chantrelle affair. Chantrelle killed his wife with opium, and tore the gas-pipe to suggest that death was due to coal-gas poisoning. Schmidt and his confederate used coal-gas, and removed all traces of it in order that their victim's death might be ascribed to the alcohol of which she had so freely partaken before she sank into her fatal sleep.

Whoever committed the memorable Battersea flat murder displayed the most useful form of originality in which a murderer can possibly indulge. He planned and carried out his crime with such complete success that from the night of the happening to the present hour neither the professional nor the amateur experts in criminal investigation have been able to suggest a reasonable solution of the mystery.

No writer of sensational romance ever devised a more baffling "Who did it?" story. My friend, Sir Melville Macnaghten, who was the head of the Criminal Investigation Department at Scotland Yard at the time of the tragedy, says, in referring to it in his deeply interesting "Days of My Years," that he himself, with his intimate knowledge of all the details and the surrounding circumstances, has never been able to put forward a theory which there is a scrap of good evidence to support.

On the night of Saturday, July 16th, 1910, an actor whom I had known for some years as a player of small parts at suburban houses and in provincial companies—he had played one or two parts in my own melodramas when they were on tour—was found lying dead on the emergency staircase that led to the back entrances of some flats in the Battersea Park Road.

At about nine-thirty in the evening a taxi-driver passing along a road which runs at the back of the flats in question heard the report of two pistol shots, and directly afterwards saw a man dropping over the garden wall and hurrying away. It was too dark at the time for the witness to discern the fugitive's features.

The taxi-driver went at once to the nearest police-station, and an officer returned with him and tried to obtain admission to the flat on the ground floor. He knocked several times, but getting no reply he went upstairs to the first floor.

On knocking, he was admitted by a lady, who on being questioned said that she had heard the shots. In this flat the constable also saw a young fellow of about twenty, and he said that he had heard the shots.

The constable borrowed a lamp from the lady, and the young fellow offered to go down with him and search the lower premises. They went down the iron staircase into the little back garden, and there, lying on the scullery steps on the ground floor, the body of a middle-aged man was discovered. It was the young man who found it, and called the policeman to come and bring the lamp.

Two bullets had pierced the man's skull, and his face had been terribly lacerated by someone with whom he had evidently had a fierce struggle. This and the wound had caused the blood to flow so freely that it was difficult to discern the features. The man had on carpet slippers, and in his coat pocket was found a murderous life-preserver.

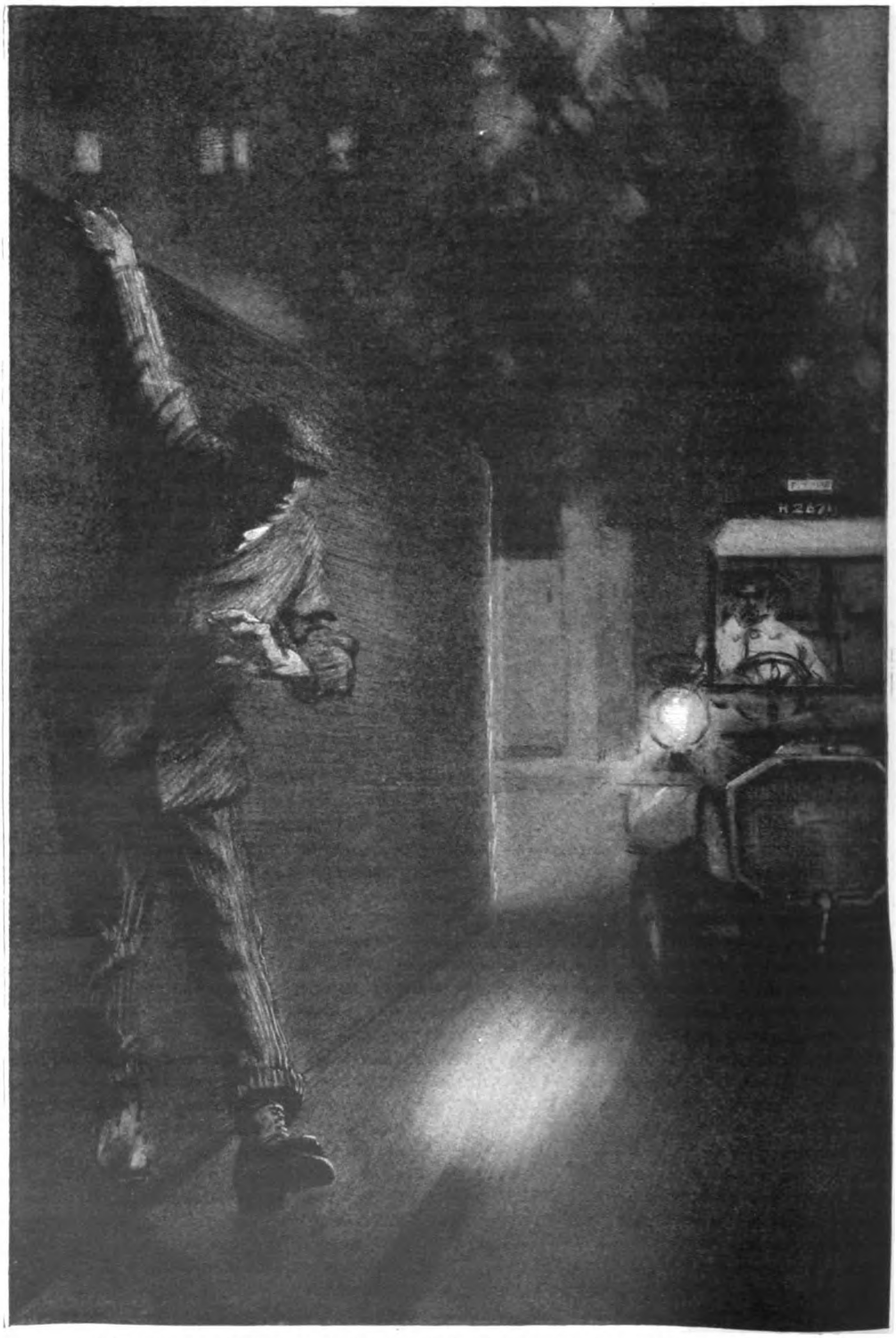
The policeman who had discovered that the door of the ground-floor flat was unlocked, and that the flat was empty and unoccupied, had in the meantime been searching this, and he discovered on the mantelpiece in the dining-room a pair of heavy boots and a small handbag.

The man who had been so murderously attacked was not dead at the time he was found, but he was unconscious.

There was evidence to show that the man had himself taken off his boots in that room and put on the carpet slippers there. It was evident that he had been in the act of creeping stealthily up the stairs when his assailant, who had either followed him or had been secreted in the garden, closed with him, and eventually shot him.

The young man who had helped to find the body was not a little astonished when the constable returned from the police-station, to which the victim had been conveyed, with the information that the man was dead, and that in searching his pockets a card had been discovered which established his identity. He showed the card to the young man, who looked at it and said, "Good God! I have seen my own father die."

Let it be said at once that not the slightest suspicion rested either upon this young man or the lady. The lady, an actress and a teacher of elocution, had been on intimate terms for



"HE SAW A MAN DROPPING OVER THE GARDEN WALL AND HURRYING AWAY."

many years with the dead man, and she had been acquainted with his sons, in whom she had taken great interest from their childhood. On the night in question the youth had told his father that he was going to the flat, where the lady who was training him for the stage was to give him a lesson in elocution. It was at the father's own desire that these lessons were given.

A diary found in the dead man's possession revealed the fact that he was insanely jealous, but there was evidence that he was certainly not jealous of his son, and yet he was creeping up the iron stairs towards the lady's flat with carpet slippers on his feet and a murderous weapon in his possession.

Upon whom was that weapon to be used? And who could have known that the jealous actor was going to creep up the iron stairs at the back of the flats, followed him there, and murdered him at the foot of the stairway?

The man who got over the garden wall undoubtedly committed the murder, but why he committed it and how he discovered that he would have an opportunity of committing it the most exhaustive inquiry failed to suggest.

The murdered man had an original idea when he decided to change his boots for carpet slippers in an empty flat in order to creep upstairs to the one above it armed with a life-preserver. But there was more originality in the idea of the man who followed the jealous actor who was preparing to commit a murder and there and then murdered the intending murderer, made his escape, went home, and, presumably, resumed his ordinary avocations with such success that he remains unsuspected to this day.

He is the one man on earth who, presumably, holds the key to the Battersea flat mystery.

It has happened to me to receive under my own roof at various times four men who committed murder—two who had been condemned to death and their sentences commuted to penal servitude for life; one who, after his crime, committed suicide; and one who was sent to Broadmoor, where he now is.

I have a very vivid personal recollection of another murderer who was only a casual acquaintance. He was introduced to me in the year 1874 by a friend of mine who had known him at Scarborough, where he was supposed to be a French count, and his name was Henri de Tourville.

At the time I met de Tourville he had committed three murders, and he had committed them so successfully that no breath of suspicion rested upon him. Passing for a gentleman of wealth, he had by his crimes acquired a considerable sum of money. He became naturalized, entered the Temple as a student, and was eventually called to the Bar.

Henri Dieudonné Pineau de Tourville—it was undoubtedly an assumed name—was at one time a waiter in a Paris restaurant. An Englishman of fortune in Paris became interested in him, taught him English, and made him his travelling companion.

The promoted waiter's rich English patron died, and there is every reason to believe that his patron's end was artistically hastened by de Tourville. At any rate, his patron's death placed de Tourville in possession of funds.

He came to Scarborough, called himself Count Henri de Tourville, cut a great dash at the fashionable northern watering-place, and there won the heart of an English lady of fortune and married her.

Directly after the marriage he explained to his wife's mother that his remittances from his estates abroad had been delayed, and the confiding lady advanced him a sufficient sum of money to defray the honeymoon expenses.

When the count and the countess returned from the honeymoon de Tourville called upon his mother-in-law, who, presuming that his remittances must have arrived by this time, asked him for a cheque for the money she had lent him. De Tourville said that would be all right. He would send her the money in the evening.

In the meantime he would like her to see a pair of pistols which he had just bought. They were quite works of art, and he would like her opinion of them. At least, that is the statement he made shortly afterwards, when the lady herself was unable to furnish information to anyone.

While he was conversing with his mother-in-law the report of a pistol was heard. De Tourville rushed out of the room and called for aid. While his mother-in-law was looking down one of the barrels of the pistols it had accidentally gone off; the bullet had lodged in her head and killed her.

There was an inquest. De Tourville's story was accepted without demur by the coroner and the jury, and the verdict was "Accidental death." De Tourville was relieved of a debt and his wife was the richer by her mother's decease.

Some time afterwards de Tourville was wanted abroad on a capital charge. He had

left the place where the murder was alleged to have been committed and come to England, so that the question of extradition arose, and there were many arguments. In the course of the extradition proceedings the death of the lady who had looked down the barrel of her son-in-law's pistol was brought up, with the result that a Home Office order was issued for the exhumation of the body. Directly the body was scientifically examined it was discovered that the fatal bullet had entered at the back of the lady's head!

The killing by the "accidental discharge of a pistol" was this clever scoundrel's second murder. His next feat was to poison his wife, who had become an invalid in consequence of his ill-treatment, taken to her bed, and been attended during her sickness by de Tourville himself. His wife died and left a will and two children.

De Tourville had all the property, with the exception of a house which was settled on the two children. He promptly insured the house for a large sum of money, and one night burnt it down, the children barely escaping with their lives.

The insurance company had their suspicions, but they did not prosecute the French count, who was also an English barrister and a man of wealth. They contented themselves with not paying the insurance money.

Soon afterwards de Tourville made the acquaintance of another lady of fortune—he was a George Joseph Smith on a grand scale—and she was so fascinated with him that she married him, and made a will which left all her property, which was worth some fifty thousand pounds, to her husband. It was in November, 1875, when the marriage took place, and very soon afterwards de Tourville conceived another original idea in the way of murder.

In the summer of 1876 the de Tourvilles were travelling abroad. In July they were at Trafoz, in the Austrian Tyrol, and one day they left the hotel intending to make a journey to the Stelvio Pass. But they did not get there.

De Tourville, when half the journey was done, thought their intended destination was too far and ordered the coachman to drive back to Trafoz. They stopped at various places, and the husband and wife alighted to admire the scenery.

Towards evening, in a lonely spot not far from home, the count sent the coachman on to the hotel, saying that he and his wife would walk back.

Late that evening de Tourville returned to the hotel alone. He was in great distress. His wife and he had stopped on the edge of a ravine to admire the outlook. Suddenly the lady uttered a cry. She had gone too near the edge and lost her footing. In another moment she fell headlong over the precipice.

A search party was formed and set out, accompanied by some gendarmes and guided by de Tourville. The bereaved husband soon found the spot where his wife's body was lying. He looked over the edge of the ravine, and shouted to the gendarmes and their assistants, who had gone down, to bring the body up at once.

But the chief of the gendarmes had his idea. He had looked around, and he had looked above, and he had examined the spot where the body was lying, and he had come to the conclusion that it never fell there. There were no signs of any of the earth above having been dislodged, and the clothing of the lady was not torn in the way it would have been had the body come down the jagged side of the ravine. But there were signs that a body had been dragged along a portion of the level ground below, and the signs of the dragging ceased where the dead Countess de Tourville lay.

De Tourville was promptly arrested and brought before a magistrate. There was a local inquiry, and the magistrates decided that it was probably an accident, and they did not feel justified in keeping this rich English gentleman, who was also an English *avocat*, in custody. So they let him go, and he returned to England.

But though the local magistrates were satisfied, the Austrian police were not. They ordered a more scientific investigation of the scene of the catastrophe, and the result was that they demanded the extradition of Count Henri de Tourville on a charge of murdering his wife.

The extradition was, as I have said, keenly debated in the courts of law—de Tourville had the command of a large sum of money—but eventually he was given up to the Austrian authorities, was tried for the murder, and sentenced to twenty years' confinement in a fortress.

There are stories of originality in murder which would be enthralling could they be told. But they are known only to the men and women who have displayed such inventiveness and fertility of resource in their originality, and have accomplished the desired death so cleverly that the word "Murder" has never been even whispered in connection with the victim's departure from this world of care.

A Cure by Comparison.

By CHRISTIAN TUNSTALL.

Illustrated by Dudley Hardy, R.I.

"YOU good women are so narrow."

"Am I?" asked Mrs. Randall, and the inflection in her voice was blent of amusement and suspense. A good deal hung on the issue of this conversation; she realized intuitively that her son had embarked on an abstract subject with the intention of leading up to some very definite statement. She was afraid that she knew what was coming.

Teddy Randall rose from the easy-chair into which he had flung himself and, with his hands in his pockets, stood gazing down upon his mother. It struck him suddenly that she was looking particularly charming this morning; the little details of her dress appealed to his fastidious eye, and she seemed to carry with her always an atmosphere of delicate grace that placed her apart from other women whom he knew. For the first time his heart misgave him, and he almost wished he had deferred his present task.

"I didn't say *you* were," he replied.

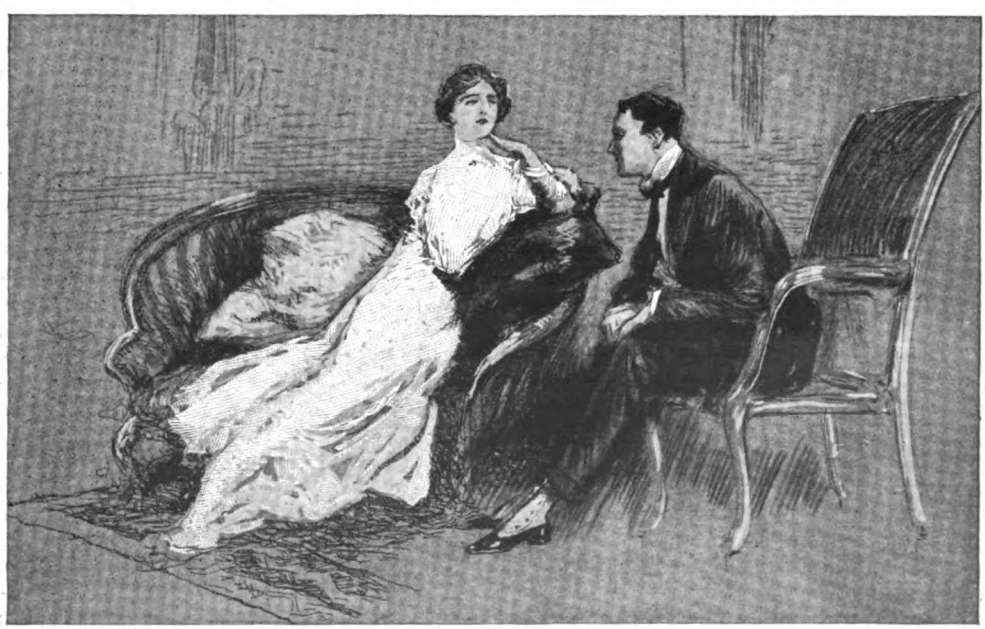
"You said 'you good women,' I felt the implied accusation."

"I meant good women as a class," he said, moving restlessly to the window and looking out upon the quiet street and the peep of busy London that intruded where the road opened into a main thoroughfare. "As a rule, they tar everyone who isn't what they consider hall-marked with the same brush—and there are exceptions, you know."

Mrs. Randall felt her nerves tighten and prepare themselves for the coming blow. But her voice was very even and impartial as she replied:—

"Of course. I am inclined to believe that there may be a good many."

"There are dozens," he said, a little hotly—"even upon the stage, which is supposed,



"SHE REALIZED INTUITIVELY THAT HER SON HAD EMBARKED ON AN ABSTRACT SUBJECT WITH THE INTENTION OF LEADING UP TO SOME VERY DEFINITE STATEMENT."

by those who don't know, to harbour the least worthy."

Mrs. Randall turned slightly in her seat, so that her son could only see the back of her head, with its coils of wavy hair. She felt that she must hear what he had to say before she could face him. A great fear clutched at her heart and drove the colour slowly from her cheeks.

"There are good and bad in every profession," she said, guardedly. "I should not condemn anyone *because* they were on the stage."

"Then——" Teddy hesitated for a moment. "You know I've been out a good deal lately—in the evenings, I mean?"

"You dined at home exactly a month ago to-day—yes, you have been out rather often, perhaps."

"Do you know where I have been?"

"Probably at the theatre," replied his mother. "We both have a weakness for drama, haven't we?"

"I have been," he said, slowly, "every night to the Frivolity."

Mrs. Randall instinctively gripped the arm of her settee, as though to nerve herself for some coming torture.

"Yes?" she said, with interest. "Is the piece so good?"

"It was not the piece—the piece is all right—but there's a girl in it——"

He paused suddenly, struck by the incongruousness of the whole situation, and because the back of his mother's head worried him. He had been forgetting her outlook during this past month, but he knew that it weighed with him more than he cared to own. She had always been his ideal woman till—well, till he thought he had found the great passion of his life. The great passions are apt to make us a little callous of the opinions even of our nearest. When it came to the point, and he had to put the passion into coherent words, it mattered greatly that he must wound his mother in the telling.

The pause was becoming uncomfortably long, when Mrs. Randall suddenly turned and held out her hands.

"Well, my son?" she said. "Is she very pretty?"

In two strides Teddy had cleared the space between them, and, drawing up the little chair on which he had sat every evening as a small boy, he settled himself down by his mother's knee and took her hands in his.

"She is fascinating," he said. "I don't know if you would call her pretty—but she's got such a way with her."

Mrs. Randall smiled and sighed.

"They mostly have," she said, "when we happen to be in love. What is her name?"

"She calls herself Madge Tillard, but her real name is Fanny Potts."

A curious little expression crept into Mrs. Randall's eyes.

"'Potts,' did you say?" she asked.

"Yes," he replied, a little lamely. "It is not a very patrician name, perhaps; but she——"

"No," interrupted his mother—"it wasn't that—I was thinking—that was all. I have heard the name before. I knew someone called Potts once, but you wouldn't remember her."

"Who was it?" he asked, anxiously.

"A kitchen-maid we had when you were at school; she was not with us for very long, and I daresay you never saw her. But tell me about Miss Tillard. Have you spoken to her about it yet?"

"Not yet; I wanted to tell you about her before I did."

"That was nice of you, my son. You must bring her here to see me."

Teddy disengaged his hands and looked with new eyes round his mother's boudoir. Somehow he could not imagine Madge Tillard in this environment.

"Some day—perhaps I will," he said—but uncertainly.

"Some day?" Mrs. Randall's voice expressed perhaps more surprise than she was feeling. "But, Teddy dear, you are not going to refuse to introduce my future daughter-in-law to me?"

Teddy winced slightly. This wholesale acceptance of the situation was not what he had expected, and the logical result of making Madge Tillard his wife was being forced upon him rather suddenly.

"No, of course not, mother. But come with me and see her act first."

"It's ages since we went to the theatre together; take me to-night, Teddy."

"Right you are—you brick of a mother. You'll see what I mean about her at once."

As Mrs. Randall was leaving her room before dinner she turned to her maid.

"Can you remember, Prior," she asked, "the Christian name of that kitchen-maid, Potts, whom we had down at Bigton Court one summer?"

"Do you mean the young person that came from Mrs. Wilson's, ma'am?"

"I believe she did," said Mrs. Randall. "What became of her—do you know?"

"She was mad to go on the stage, ma'am,

I believe," said Prior. "She had a voice, too—I remember Mrs. Parvin had a deal of trouble to make her quiet over her work; she gave it her finely one day when she found her skirt-dancing in the servants' hall. It was because of that she left. As Mrs. Parvin told her, the servants' hall was not a music-hall, and so she spoke to you, I believe, ma'am."

"She did," said Mrs. Randall. "I remember about her now; but I have forgotten her other name."

"It was Fanny, I believe," said Prior, as she adjusted a fold in her mistress's dress.

"I'm afraid it was," replied Mrs. Randall, and she began, a little wearily, to descend the staircase.

If she felt sick at heart, however, at least she did not show it. Teddy had never found his mother a better companion than she was that evening, and when she preceded him into the stalls at the Frivolity a little thrill of pride shot through him as he noted the glances of critical admiration that were turned upon her slim, dignified figure.

As the orchestra began the overture Mrs. Randall leant towards her son.

"You must tell me where to look for her," she whispered.

"She will be on a ladder at the right of the stage. The scene is in an orchard and she is picking apples."

As the curtain rose Mrs. Randall felt suddenly sick and faint, and for a moment she closed her eyes. Then she opened them bravely and sought the apple-tree. The girl had her back to the audience, but as the chorus reached a climax she turned and sprang from her perch into the outstretched arms of a young man standing at the foot of the ladder.

One glance at her face was sufficient—the Fanny Potts who had enlivened the dull respectability of the servants' hall was undoubtedly the Madge Tillard of Teddy's affections. The whole of Mrs. Randall's delicate soul rose in revolt. She could not tolerate this thing. What did the boy find in this girl to make him forget his family traditions and his father's name?

She glanced at Teddy's face. He was watching the stage with eager eyes, devouring every movement of his mother's ex-kitchen-maid. It was horrible; though if Teddy was to be cured of his infatuation he must not guess at the storm that raged under the quiet exterior of the woman by his side. It was of no use to appeal to his sense of the fitness of things The only chance lay in showing him the girl as she really was. But how? Here, with the glamour of the theatre upon her, she was charmingly dainty and desirable. In the cold light of day, placed in ordinary surroundings, how would she look?

When the first act was over, Teddy turned a little breathlessly to his mother.

"Well?" he asked, his eyes seeking hers.

"She is very pretty on the stage," replied Mrs. Randall. "I can quite see the attraction." Then, after a moment, she added, "Have you seen much of her by day?"

"By day? No; I've promised to take her on the river, though, one afternoon."

"You had better take me as chaperon," said his mother, "and we could motor down to Cookham."

Teddy was silent. The strange sense of contrast was upon him again. His mother and this girl seemed in some way to belong to different worlds and to demand separate standards.

He felt it was impossible to make his mother see the subtle difference, and it was difficult to explain Madge Tillard's attitude towards social limitations, without imbuing Mrs. Randall with a wrong idea of her character. He did not think that she would ever understand the point of view that swept conventions aside as superfluous. But she was behaving magnificently, and he could not hurt her by making her acceptance of his marriage more difficult.

He could realize that his revelation of the afternoon had been a shock to her—he even had a suspicion that she had had her own little matrimonial schemes for him—so that, although he could picture the amused wonder in Madge Tillard's face when he told her his mother had offered to act as chaperon, he would do so, and arrange the picnic as she wished.

Mrs. Randall was beginning to wonder if he meant to reply to her remark, when he turned to her as the curtain rose on the second act, and said:—

"All right. I'll tell her you have invited her to come with us."

Mrs. Randall sat back with a little sigh of relief. She understood Teddy's hesitancy better than he guessed, and, had she chosen, could have explained its cause to him. But she knew it was better that it should explain itself.

The play dragged out its weary length at last, and when the curtain had fallen on the final act Mrs. Randall put her hand gently on Teddy's arm.

"You would like to go behind, of course,

when you have seen me to the car. One day perhaps you would take me with you—I have always wanted to see the back of the stage."

Teddy wrapped her cloak about her shoulders before he replied.

"I'm afraid you wouldn't like it," he said. "I can't quite picture you there—it isn't the place for you at all."

Mrs. Randall turned impulsively to her son.

"Teddy," she said, a little desperately, "if it isn't the place for your mother, is it the place for the mother of your children?"

Teddy, for all his three-and-twenty years and his fancied knowledge of the world, shrank a little from the candour of her question. This aspect of the case had not presented itself to him before. He had lived in the golden present and in dreaming of a near and delightful future.

He realized suddenly that there were other sides to the question, about which he had not thought. His voice, however, was very confident as he replied:—

"I shall take her away from it all, mother dear."

"If," said Mrs. Randall, quietly, "she will come. And if she does, you must be prepared for her to need its equivalent in amusement and excitement."

"She is the sweetest girl in the world," he declared. "She will be thankful to get away from the stage—she said so herself one day."

"Did she?" asked Mrs. Randall, moving towards the door, with a mental vision of Miss Fanny Potts branded upon her tired brain, and a miserable feeling that Teddy was indeed fast in her toils. "Then get her to come on the river to-morrow, and we will help her to forget it for a little."

With her early-morning tea next day came a pencilled note from Teddy:—

"It's all right about the picnic. I've said we'll fetch her in the car directly after lunch."

So the final battle must be fought to-day. Mrs. Randall lay still for so much longer than her usual custom, wondering what weapons to select, that Prior inquired at last if she had a headache and would remain in bed.

"No," replied her mistress. "You may get out my navy serge and a white silk shirt. I am going on the river this afternoon."

Yet even she, as she took a last look at her dainty person in its workmanlike attire, did not foresee how powerful a weapon she had selected in its choice.

"You look just eighteen," declared her son, gallantly, as he sat beside her in the car that afternoon about two o'clock.

"It's the hat," she said, laughing. "These plain straws do conceal the ravages of time amazingly."

"Ravages of time!" he retorted. "Why, if I weren't your son I'd fall in love with your complexion alone."

A little flush, exquisite in tint, rose in Mrs. Randall's cheeks.

"I'm glad you approve of your old mother," she said. "I wanted to look nice to-day, for your sake."

Miss Fanny Potts—or, as Mrs. Randall invariably spoke of her, Miss Tillard—had given Teddy an address in Fulham, where she shared a flat with a friend. There were no signs of her outside the building when the car drew up at the main entrance, and Mrs. Randall suggested that Teddy should go to her door and announce their arrival.

How, she wondered as she watched the doorway, would Fanny Potts meet her? Would there be any sign of recognition, or would the girl brazen out the situation? Had she any idea that the Teddy Randall she had caught so easily was the son of her former mistress?

She had worked herself into a state of almost nervous tension when the sound of a woman's laugh floated out upon the hot, still, summer air. Miss Fanny Potts was descending the staircase, talking as she came. Mrs. Randall's hand clenched unconsciously upon the stem of her parasol, and for a second she held her breath.

In another moment the doorway seemed filled by the dazzling apparition of the Frivolity beauty, and in the swiftness of the first glance Mrs. Randall had comprehended the elaborate character of her toilette. She was wearing a white muslin frock, cut low at the neck and with short sleeves; a pale blue hat, crowned with a garden of pink roses, surmounted her vivid face and the abundance of her dark hair. As she came towards the car Mrs. Randall had to acknowledge that she was a handsome girl and that her eyes were superb. It was, perhaps, small wonder that Teddy had fallen a victim to her charms. He was walking behind her with a shaded blue scarf over his arm, which he proceeded to drape around her shoulders before she reached the car. He was looking rather hot and a little anxious. The quarter of an hour during which his mother had waited had held a new and not altogether pleasant experience for him.

"So sorry I wasn't ready," began Miss

Fanny Potts, in her high, rather staccato voice. "I couldn't get these wretched pin-curls to stick on to-day. It's so ghastly hot, isn't it? Teddy had to help me fix the back ones, didn't you, Teddy?"

For the fraction of a second Teddy met his mother's eyes. A little thrill of intense relief ran through her; circumstances were on her side and were fighting for her. She was grateful to Miss Potts's unmanageable curls; they had taught Teddy one lesson, at least.

Coming out from the darkness of the house into the bright sunshine, Miss Potts had not recognized the woman who sat awaiting her in the car. It was not until she had reached its side and taken the hand extended to her that she saw who was her hostess of the afternoon.

For a moment she wavered, but the stage is the great instructor of resource, and she regained her equanimity before Mrs. Randall had completed her words of greeting.

"Please don't apologize, Miss Tillard. I am sure pin-curls must be very trying in this weather. Won't you get into the car?"

"IN ANOTHER MOMENT THE DOORWAY SEEMED FILLED BY THE DAZZLING APPARITION OF THE FRIVOLITY BEAUTY."

Miss Potts obeyed in silence, but with her brain working at lightning speed. Of course Mrs. Randall did not recognize her. She called her "Miss Tillard," and it was five years since she had been at Bigton Court. She was quite safe, and could enjoy herself without restraint.

Teddy got into the car and sank into the opposite seat.

"I wish you'd bring a wrap," he said. "It will be cooler before we are home."

"My good boy, how you do fuss!" returned Miss Potts. "Do look at the sky and feel the heat—why, I should be stewed at the mere sight of a coat!"

"We are going out of London," said Mrs. Randall, gently. "I believe Teddy is right. He is so used to taking care of me that he thinks of these things."

"Quite a Sir Charles Grandison or a Don Quixote," laughed Miss Potts. "Weren't they the old Johnnies who fussed round with wraps and things?"

"I hadn't heard it," said Mrs. Randall, "but perhaps you are right."

The drive was not exactly a success, though Mrs. Randall kept the ball of conversation

spinning indefatigably. Teddy was inclined to relapse into silence, unless directly referred to, and his mother's watchful eyes noted the little sign of worry in the unaccustomed tightening of his lips. Miss Potts found no difficulty in expressing her ideas, but after a time she began to rally Teddy on his moroseness.

"You're too hot," she declared; "and I'm sure you want a drink—I know I do. Couldn't we stop somewhere?"

"I think we might wait till we get to Cookham," said Mrs. Randall, quietly. "I have drinks in the tea-basket, but it is rather unget-at-able at present. We shall not be long now."

Teddy roused himself.

"It is fearfully hot," he said. "I believe you are right, Miss Tillard—drinks will be rather good."

Miss Potts leant towards him and laid her ungloved, beringed hand upon his knee.

"Have I offended you? Why 'Miss Tillard'? It used to be 'Madge,' Teddy."

Mrs. Randall shivered as if she were suddenly cold. The use of Teddy's Christian name by this girl, and her tacit appropriation of him, jarred on her unspeakably.

"I'm sorry," said Teddy. "Did I say 'Miss Tillard'?"

"You did," she replied. "And if you do it again I shall be awfully hurt."

"I'll try to remember," he replied, but without emotion. Something had snapped in his being that afternoon, and for the first time he questioned the quality of her fascination. It may have been the sight of her untidy sitting-room, into which she had invited him, and where he had wrestled with the recalcitrant curls, or it may have been the girl's cool assumption that he would think it a privilege to act lady's-maid and button the back of her frock, which dispersed the glamour that had dazzled him.

Whatever it was, he looked at her this afternoon with other eyes than those with which he had watched her only last night. As he sat opposite them in the motor-car the essential difference between his mother and Madge Tillard appeared glaringly patent, and he turned his eyes once or twice from the actress's made-up complexion to the delightful freshness of his mother's face, with an unconscious sense of relief.

The river looked seductively cool and inviting, and the three settled themselves into a punt, in which Miss Potts lay at full length whilst his mother and Teddy took the pole in turn.

From his point of vantage Teddy surveyed his lady-love. She was undoubtedly good to look at—though the bold sunlight, falling pitilessly on her upturned face, refused to throw any deception on the rouge and powder that seemed amazingly out of place in her present surroundings. He glanced at his mother, sitting at the farther end of the boat and trailing a slim hand in the rippling water. He thought he had never seen two women more opposed in type.

They had tea at the edge of a big field, where the trees came down to the brink to dip their branches in the water, and when the meal was over Mrs. Randall produced a book and declared that she wished to read. Wouldn't the other two like to explore the country? She would take care of the boat.

She watched them out of sight, and then sat with folded hands and looked back on the afternoon. What would Teddy do? Would he go through with this thing? She had no need to be told the meaning of his curious silences—he was being disillusioned, and that rapidly. But how far—oh, how far had he gone already?

The heat was intense; not a leaf stirred, and she presently became aware that the sky was darkening. There was certainly going to be a storm, and Mrs. Randall looked anxiously for signs of the wanderers.

Before long they appeared, walking rapidly, Miss Potts in front of Teddy.

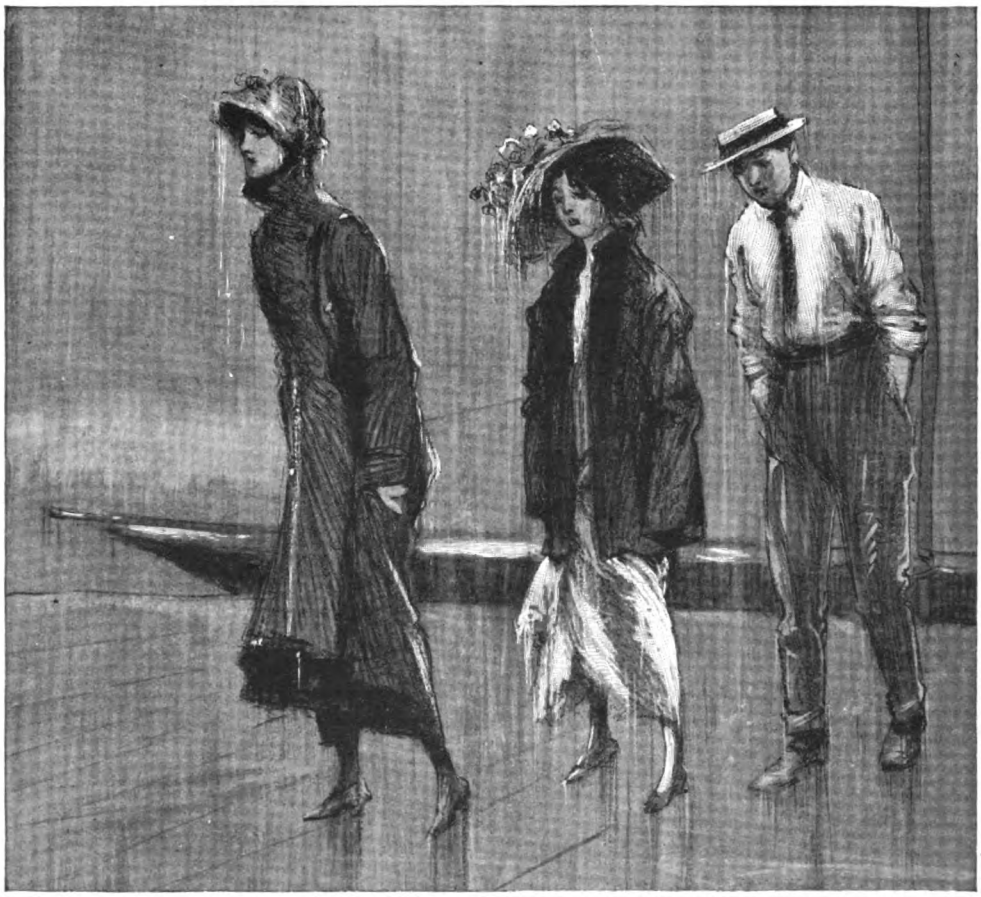
"Oh!" she gasped as she reached the boat. "There's going to be a storm, and I'm simply terrified of thunder!"

"We had better make haste and race it," said Teddy. "We may reach the car before it gets bad."

The hope was not realized. By the time they had covered half the distance to Cookham a vivid flash of lightning preluded a crash of thunder, and the storm was on them.

Miss Potts had flung herself down in the punt with her face hidden, and a little scream escaped her at each roll of thunder. Teddy had put his coat over her dress, but it was small protection when the torrential rain began to fall.

Mrs. Randall opened the tea-basket and, taking out a cup, began to bail out the water as it gathered in the boat. In a few moments Miss Potts was forced to sit up, and her condition was truly pitiable. Her exquisite complexion was running down her cheeks and falling in little tell-tale patches upon her muslin frock. The eyebrows had lost their delicate arch, and the hair beneath the now



"IT WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT TO FIND A WETTER TRIO THAN THAT WHICH EMERGED FROM THE PUNT."

draggled hat lay in limp, dejected coils upon her forehead.

Teddy, glancing from her to his mother, was struck with a sudden wonder at his recent blindness. Mrs. Randall was busy with the tea-cup, and, drenched though she was, there was nothing about her appearance to detract from her usual charm. In fact, her son thought he had never realized her distinctive daintiness before.

By the time they reached Cookham it would have been difficult to find a wetter trio than that which emerged from the punt.

"I am sorry your things are so spoilt," said Mrs. Randall, quietly. "You must let the replacing of them be my affair, as they have suffered at my picnic."

The suggestion seemed to soothe Miss Potts's ruffled feelings, and she fell in cheerfully with the idea that they should all go into the nearest hotel and have their sodden clothes dried before returning to town. She was voluble in her thanks as they neared her flat, and when they drew up at the entrance she held out a cordial hand to Mrs. Randall. Then she turned to Teddy.

"Are you coming up to the theatre to-night?" she asked. "I've a supper on afterwards, and we shall be having a bit of fun."

Mrs. Randall's heart seemed to stop as she listened for his reply.

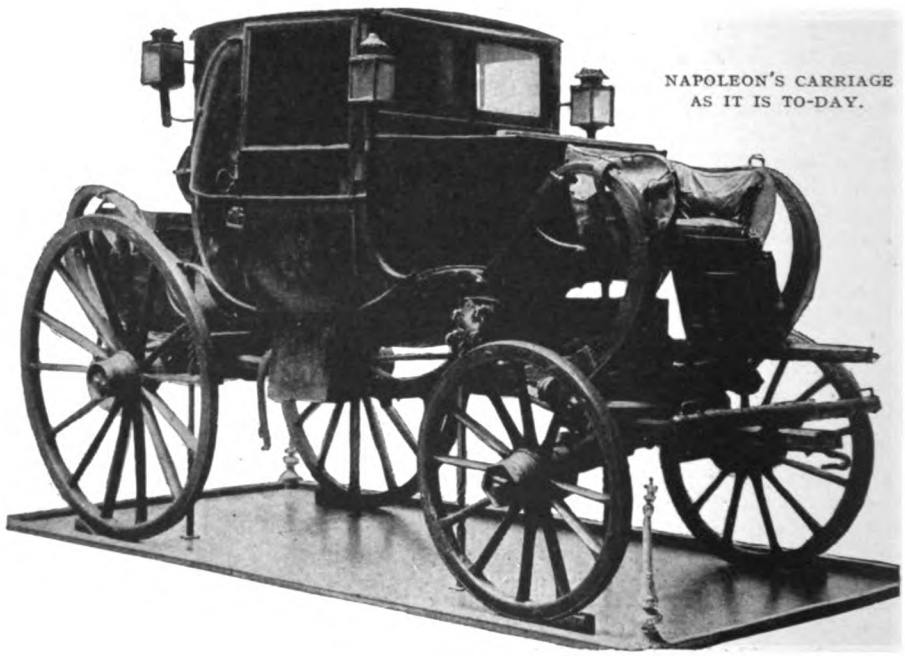
"I'm afraid I can't," he said. "My mother has someone dining with her to-night."

"Well, so long, then," returned Miss Potts, gaily. "Perhaps you'll come another night, when you needn't do the dutiful."

He watched her gravely as she mounted the steps, and then took the place beside his mother.

"Whom have I dining with me to-night, Teddy?" she asked, with an odd little shake in her voice, as the motor bowled swiftly towards home.

"Your son," he replied, putting his big hand over the small one lying on her lap. "To-night—and for many nights to come!"



NAPOLEON'S CARRIAGE AS IT IS TO-DAY.

The Romance of Napoleon's Carriage.

By JOHN T. TUSSAUD.

This most interesting relic of Waterloo was captured and brought to London a hundred years ago this month. Here is its story as told by its present possessor.

TIMEWORN it now stands before us, a thing of gaunt and sombre aspect. This old war-coach offers, to those who contemplate it, a full measure of historic reminiscence recalling the most striking and critical episodes in the great Corsican's career.

He entered it at the time his power stood at its zenith, and retained it in constant attendance upon him down to the hour he took refuge within it a conquered and a broken man. It was built for his campaign in Russia. In it he travelled many a league on the road to Moscow. Bereft of its wheels and lashed upon a sleigh, through the perils of that terrible retreat, it safely carried him far on his way back to the gates of Paris. With him it was sent to the Isle of Elba; thence it helped him along on his last auspicious journey to the French capital,

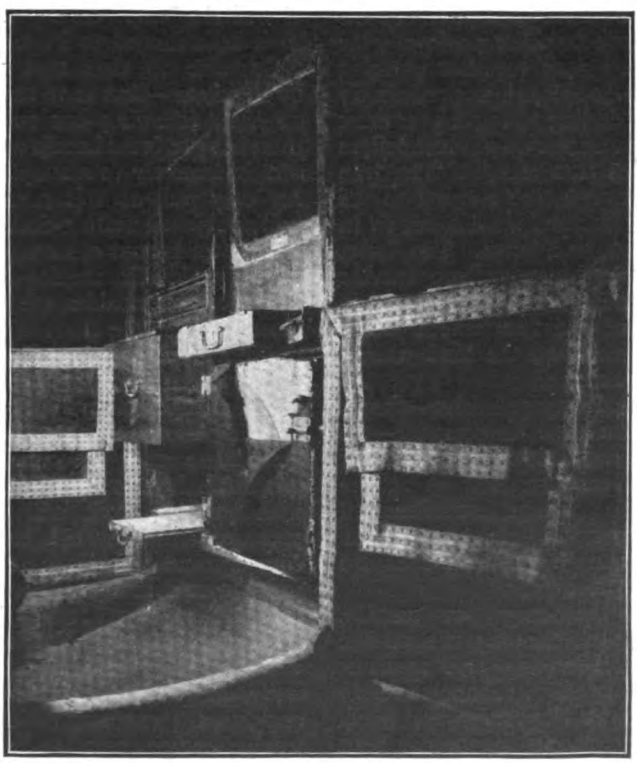
It assisted him on his way to Waterloo. Standing on the main road hard by La Belle Alliance, it awaited him throughout that memorable Sunday, June 18th, a hundred years ago. At the end of the day's ordeal, into it, sore and ill, he flung himself, only to struggle from it at the point of capture to take refuge in the confusion and the shadow of the night.

Deepened long ago into a monotone of dusky grey, still here and there it betrays a touch of colour revealing a fair estimate of its former self. Simple and modest as Imperial carriages go, nevertheless, on a certain May day in the year 1812, as it sallied forth on its maiden voyage, its back turned upon the old palace of St. Cloud and its fore-carriage set upon the high road to Russia, it must have looked a comely chariot—as yet unsullied by the stain of travel, and not yet degraded by the lust of war.

By the man that made it—one Simon of Brussels—it would have been designated a *berline de voyage*, or maybe a *carrosse à six chevaux;* by us it has been called a travelling carriage and technically classed as a chariot-built coach.

Dark blue, black and low, with here and there a line of red and gold, were the colours under which it made its *début.*

The head, or upper part of the body, is constructed of thick black enamelled leather stretching over a strong framework of ash. The lower portion consists of finely-polished wood panelling originally of a rich dark blue colour. A narrow brass fillet traverses the centre of the body, lining off its upper from its lower sections, and under this fillet runs a delicate gilt scroll composed of the fruit, leaf, and tendrils of the vine. This neat and unpretentious bordering, together with the emblazonment of the Imperial arms upon the doors, constitutes the only tangible claim the carriage has to anything in the nature of artistic adornment.



A VIEW OF THE INTERIOR OF THE CARRIAGE.

A curious bulkhead, or boot, built out from the forepart of the coach, provides, amongst other things, the very important accommodation contingent upon a long and unbroken journey—the opportunity of resting at full length within it.

Under this bulkhead Napoleon's camp bedstead still reposes, neatly encased within a receptacle some six inches square and three feet long, folded, ready to be withdrawn at a moment's notice. When and where this bedstead was last required for its master's use are points of interest often conjectured, but as yet not satisfied.

Placed beyond the bulkhead, unusually forward and high above the fore-wheels, is perched the coachman's dicky—a dicky on which the coachman must have sat alone, for its size excludes any chance of companionship. It is supported by slender scroll-iron stays in a manner so mobile—so sensitive to the slightest movement—that the poor Jehu who piloted the coach through those long and weary journeys we know it to have traversed must at times have felt sorely tempted to guide his horses from their prescribed course and to steer them away into the Land of Nod.

The doors possess the simple distinction of opening in the opposite direction to those of an ordinary English carriage, whilst the Imperial

arms—a device borrowed of the Cæsars—are still to be clearly deciphered upon both panels.

The ponderous under-carriage might well suggest to the mind of a mechanic an instance in which weight had far outbidden advantage in strength. The heavy split, crane-neck perch, the deep solid axle-bed, and the cumbersome fore-carriage have been constructed throughout in wrought iron, and offer a good example of the coach-smith's work of a century ago. The great Cee springs are in keeping with the rest, heavy and strong. The thick leather straps plying them, and carrying the full weight of the body of the carriage and all contained within it, are still in sound condition and quite capable of doing their work; but by way of precaution they have now been relieved of all strain, and the weight is borne by four iron standards springing directly from the floor.

The wheels, even compared with others of the period in which they were made, are very heavily dished. Following the Continental manner, the spokes are arranged in pairs, so that their spacing-out might be described as two close together and two wide apart—those placed near together entering the rim near where the felloes join, presumably with the object of adding strength at a weak point. The rims are made up of seven felloes fixed together with iron clamps. The iron tyres, heavy and rough, are secured to the rims with bolts and nuts, instead of, as in our day, by rivets and burrs. The hubs, or stocks, large and massive, are further strengthened by stock hoops, the flange on the outer hoops of the fore wheels being hexagonal, whilst those on the hind wheels are of a plain round shape.

The axles are curiously primitive—simple nut-axles used from time immemorial—the wheels being held in position by means of strong rough iron nuts screwed on at the extremity of the axle arms and further secured by a pin passed through a hole at the end of them. Strangely enough, the axle-ends are absolutely devoid of caps.

Behind on the foot-stage, or rumble, there still rests, as on the day the vehicle was taken, the odd-looking and spacious shoe-shaped trunk in which so many articles of apparel belonging to Napoleon were found. This is doubtless the source from which have flowed during the past century not a few genuine but also numberless doubtful belongings attributed to the great Napoleon, which have been offered for sale under the "incontestable" sworn testimony of so many irresponsible and illusive authorities as having been found in Napoleon's carriage captured at Waterloo.

The four black square metal lamps fixed in a rough and ready way with iron rods to the corners of the coach have a simple and quaint appearance, but otherwise have little about them to call for comment. They have been made to take large wax candles and have the usual spring sockets to hold them.

So much for the exterior. Glancing within the coach, we immediately find ourselves in closer touch with things personal to the great Emperor.

We find therein provision for a couple of passengers only. Here are two deep and roomy seats, divided by a tall, movable arm-rest, offering the occupants unusual freedom and comfort. Confronting these seats, set high up on the front of the vehicle, are a pair of windows affording each traveller a full view of the driver and of the road and country beyond. Beneath these are displayed those objects of interest which have so readily engrossed the attention of many millions of visitors, who, during the century past, have been moved to inspect the carriage.

Opposite to that seat usually occupied by Napoleon—that is to say, the one on the off side, following our rule of the road—there hangs a brass handle which is apparently attached merely to a simple shallow drawer. An easy pull at this reveals a strong and well-appointed writing-desk capable of being withdrawn far out of its recess. This action, with the aid of a writing-slope that unfolds from the top, enables the desk to span the space between the front of the carriage and the seat, thus giving to its occupant all the facility and convenience desirable for carrying on a correspondence at leisure. Nor is this the only accommodation the desk provides. Some time after the carriage had changed ownership it was found that an extra pull withdrew the desk still farther from its aperture, and upon this being done a secret compartment was discovered behind it, in which were found jewels and money of great value.

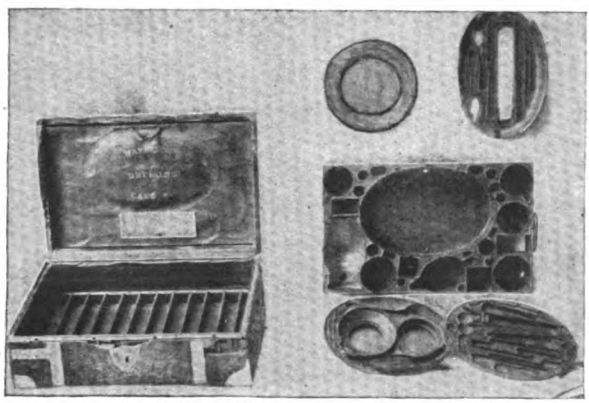
On the right side of this desk, fitted into a narrow but deep recess, there rests a long, wedge-shaped box made to hold a goodly supply of those quills of which Napoleon was so uncommonly prodigal.

Below these fittings, and readily engaging attention, is a large cloth-covered door, hinged to open towards the middle of the carriage, so that when butting against the arm-rest of the seat it divides the lower

portion of the interior into two separate parts. When so placed it exposes a large cavity constituting the lower part, or foot, of a sleeping compartment; the seat of the coach serving for the head, and the space between being bridged by a plank, or board. In this cavity were found all the necessary things for making up a complete and comfortable bed.

NAPOLEON'S BEAUTIFULLY CONSTRUCTED "NÉCESSAIRE," WHICH WAS A PRESENT FROM MARIE LOUISE.

On the near side of the front interior, placed immediately under the window, is a shallow rack made to take small things such as sealing-wax, wafers, paper-knife, etc., the receptacle being furnished with a wooden flap and catch to enclose it. Underneath this is a large and strongly-made drawer that pulls out endways. In it many things were discovered which were in immediate use before the capture of the coach, amongst them several pieces of a silver service containing articles of food partly consumed.



THE INTERIOR OF THE "NÉCESSAIRE," SHOWING SOME OF THE FITTINGS.

Below this again there is an opening, which has never boasted of a door to enclose it. At the bottom of it a brass-bound rest, or table, has been fitted between grooves so that it may be drawn out, or pushed in, as occasion required. This also forms a bridge to unite the recess with the seat facing it, so as to provide a second sleeping compartment when found necessary.

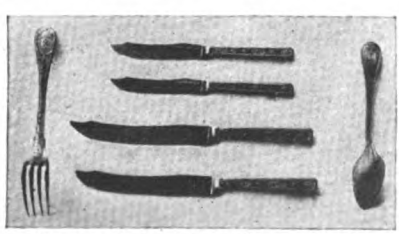
On the inside of the doors hang heavy cloth lapels covering large square pockets, edged with broad gold-coloured gimp braid speckled with blue spots. On the outer side of each seat is a deep hole, both of which contained a loaded pistol ready at hand in case of emergency.

Well above and running across the back of the seats is a half-circle recess serving as a gun-rack, forming a strange protrusion viewed from the outside of the coach.

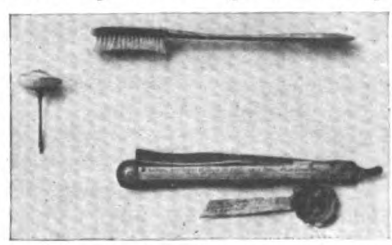
An oil lamp, which at best could have yielded but a feeble light, takes up the customary position in the centre at back of the carriage.

The interior is lined throughout with a dark blue cloth, in colour and texture similar to that used at the present day for the same purpose.

A fairly reliable inventory of things found in the carriage on the night it was captured has been handed down to us, and the following is a copy:—



A PART OF NAPOLEON'S SERVICE OF SILVER.



THE EMPEROR'S TOOTH-BRUSH, RAZOR, AND A GIMLET FOUND IN THE CARRIAGE.

A beautifully-constructed and marvellously

well-appointed *nécessaire* comprising some seventy pieces, a few in solid gold and many mounted in the same metal (a present from Marie Louise to Napoleon on the eve of his departure for the Russian campaign of 1812, and designed and carried out under her immediate supervision).

by in the secret drawer at back of the desk. A missile, maybe, that ended the days of a friend, or one possibly that endangered Napoleon's own life.

A considerable number of mounted and unmounted diamonds found secreted in various parts of the carriage, three hundred

THE CAPTURE OF NAPOLEON'S CARRIAGE.

Several parts of a solid silver service, engraved with the Imperial arms.

A large silver chronometer.

A green velvet cap.

A mahogany liquor-case containing two leather-covered bottles, one filled with rum and the other holding a small quantity of sweet wine.

A pair of spurs.

Two fine merino mattresses.

An assortment of the finest bed and other linen.

Many toilet requisites, amongst them a cake of Windsor soap.

A steel camp bedstead, still in position on the carriage, in the case made to hold it under the boot.

A uniform, sword, and cocked hat.

A rich and costly Imperial robe.

A handsome diamond head-dress, or tiara.

A pair of pistols, loaded, found in recesses at side of seats.

Many gold medals with Napoleon's portrait and name engraved upon them.

An article devoid of intrinsic value, but nevertheless possessing an exceptional interest—namely, a musket ball flattened out to the shape of a thin medal, found carefully put

of these stones alone being discovered in the above-mentioned *nécessaire*.

The jewels and other articles easy of acquisition fell, for the most part, to the lot of Major von Keller's men of the 15th Prussian Infantry Regiment of the Line, which was that night under the command of General Count Gneisenau.

The coach was drawn by a team of six of the finest brown Normandy horses, four driven by the coachman, the leaders under the control of a postilion.

When the coach was overtaken by the Prussians, that is to say about a quarter past eleven at night, outside the town of Jenappe, the postilion and the leaders were killed outright, whilst the coachman, severely wounded, was left for dead upon the road. Recovering from his many wounds—one of which entailed the loss of his right arm—he was induced by Major von Keller himself to come over to this country with the coach and horses. These were exhibited, as a very special attraction for the Christmas holidays of 1815, at the London Museum (then but recently opened by Mr. Bullock) in Piccadilly, a house of entertainment that

was soon to be known to future generations as the Egyptian Hall.

The accompanying caricature gives a vivid idea of the crowd who flocked to see it, and of the scant reverence with which they treated it.

And now for a century has this old war-coach been held up for the inspection of the passer-by, and, in its turn, has been the dumb witness of many a fleeting and touching episode—for as it stood have not time and

A CARICATURE OF THE SCENE AT THE LONDON MUSEUM (AFTERWARDS KNOWN AS THE EGYPTIAN HALL), WHEN THE CARRIAGE WAS PLACED ON EXHIBITION THERE.

many a veteran son of Mars telling his grown sons how that great day was won; many a kindly warrior gently helping his children's children to mount the steps and learn how on that day old "Boney" was made to fly, and nearly got caught in the act. But those to whom the old coach must have brought back so many vivid memories of that famous victory—and who had the greatest right to enter it—have themselves moved on, and now its doors have been fastened up and the men passed on? Has it not beheld many a young gallant, with the honours of the campaign fresh upon him, recounting to wife and child the story of that last great battle that closed the Empire of the first Napoleon; old chariot encased for secure keeping, not indeed against the ravages of time, but, with regret it must be said, safe away from the hands of those who would not scruple to despoil it.

THE PAVILION.

By E. NESBIT.

Illustrated by James Durden.

THERE was never a moment's doubt in her own mind. So she said afterwards. And everyone agreed that she had concealed her feelings with true womanly discretion. Her friend and confidante, Amelia Davenant, was at any rate completely deceived. Amelia was one of those featureless blondes who seem born to be overlooked. She adored her beautiful friend, and never, from first to last, could see any fault in her, except, perhaps, on the evening when the real things of the story happened. And even in this matter she owned at the time that it was only that her darling Ernestine did not understand.

Ernestine was a prettyish girl with the airs, so irresistible and misleading, of a beauty; most people said that she was beautiful, and she certainly managed, with extraordinary success, to produce the illusion of beauty. Quite a number of plainish girls achieve that effect nowadays. The freedom of modern dress and coiffure and the increasing confidence in herself which the modern girl experiences aid her in fostering the illusion; but in the 'sixties, when everyone wore much the same sort of bonnet, when your choice in coiffure was limited to bandeaux or ringlets, and the crinoline was your only wear, something very like genius was needed to deceive the world in the matter of your personal charms. Ernestine had that genius; hers was the smiling, ringletted, dark-haired, dark-eyed, sparkling type. Amelia had the blond bandeau and the appealing blue eyes, rather too small and rather too dull; her hands and ears were beautiful, and she kept them out of sight as much as possible. It was she who, at the age of fourteen, composed the remarkable poem beginning:—

> I know that I am ugly: did I make
> The face that is the laugh and jest of all?

and went on, after disclaiming any personal responsibility for the face, to entreat the kind earth to "cover it away from mocking eyes," and to "let the daisies blossom where it lies."

Amelia did not want to die, and her face was not the laugh and jest, or indeed the special interest, of anyone. Really life was a very good thing to Amelia, specially when she had a new dress and someone paid her a compliment. But she went on writing verses extolling the advantages of the Tomb, and grovelling metrically at the feet of One who was Another's. Until that summer when she was nineteen and went to stay with Ernestine at Doricourt. Then her muse took flight, scared, perhaps, by the possibility, suddenly and threateningly presented, of being asked to inspire verse about the real things of life.

At any rate, Amelia ceased to write poetry about the time when she and Ernestine and Ernestine's aunt went on a visit to Doricourt, where Frederick Doricourt lived with his aunt. It was not one of those hurried motor-fed excursions which we have now and call week ends, but a long, leisurely visit, when all the friends of the static aunt called on the dynamic aunt, who returned the calls with much ceremony, a big barouche, and a pair of fat horses. There were croquet parties and archery parties and little dances, all pleasant informal gaieties arranged without ceremony among people who lived within driving distance of each other and knew each other's tastes and incomes and family history as well as they knew their own.

And at Doricourt life was delightful even on the days when there was no party. It was perhaps more delightful to Ernestine than to her friend, but even so, the one least pleased was Ernestine's aunt.

"I do think," she said to the other aunt whose name was Julia—"I dare say it is not so to you, being accustomed to Mr. Frederick, of course from his childhood, but I always find gentlemen in the house so

unsettling. Especially young gentlemen. And when there are young ladies also. One is always on the *qui vive* for excitement."

"Of course," said Aunt Julia, with the air of a woman of the world; "living as you and dear Ernestine do, with only females in the house——"

"We hang up an old coat and hat of my brother's on the hatstand in the hall," Aunt Emmeline protested.

"——the presence of gentlemen in the house must be a little unsettling. For myself, I am inured to it. Frederick has so many friends. Mr. Thesiger perhaps the greatest. I believe him to be a most worthy young man, but peculiar." She leaned forward across her bright-tinted Berlin woolwork and spoke impressively, the needle with its trailing red poised in air. "You know, I hope you will not think it indelicate of me to mention such a thing—but dear Frederick —your dear Ernestine would have been in every way so suitable."

"Would have been?" Aunt Emmeline's tortoiseshell shuttle ceased its swift movement among the white loops and knots of her tatting.

"Well, my dear," said the other aunt, a little shortly, "you surely must have noticed——"

"You don't mean to suggest that Amelia —— I thought Mr. Thesiger and Amelia——"

"Amelia! I really must say! No, I was alluding to Mr. Thesiger's attentions to dear Ernestine. Most marked. In dear Frederick's place I should have found some excuse for shortening Mr. Thesiger's visit. But of course I cannot interfere. Gentlemen must manage these things for themselves. I only hope that there will be none of that trifling with the most holy affections of others which——"

The less voluble aunt cut in hotly with "Ernestine's incapable of anything so unladylike."

"Just what I was saying," the other rejoined blandly, got up, and drew the blind a little lower, for the afternoon sun was glowing on the rosy wreaths of the drawing-room carpet.

Outside in the sunshine Frederick was doing his best to arrange his own affairs. He had managed to place himself beside Miss Ernestine Meutys on the stone steps of the pavilion, but then Eugene Thesiger lay along the lower step at her feet, a good position for looking up into her eyes. Amelia was beside him, but then it never seemed to matter whom Amelia was beside.

They were talking about the pavilion on whose steps they sat, and Amelia, who often asked uninteresting questions, had wondered how old it was. It was Frederick's pavilion after all, and he felt this when his friend took the words out of his mouth and used them on his own account, even though he did give the answer the form of an appeal.

"The foundations are Tudor, aren't they?" he said. "Wasn't it an observatory or laboratory or something of that sort in Fat Henry's time?"

"Yes," said Frederick; "there was some story about a wizard or an alchemist or something, and it was burned down, and then they rebuilt it in its present style."

"The Italian style, isn't it?" said Thesiger; "but you can hardly see what it is now, for the creeper."

"Virginia creeper, isn't it?" Amelia asked, and Frederick said, "Yes, Virginia creeper." Thesiger said it looked more like a South American plant, and Ernestine said Virginia was in South America, and that was why. "I know, because of the war," she said modestly, and nobody smiled or answered. There were manners in those days.

"There's a ghost story about it, surely?" Thesiger began again, looking up at the dark closed doors of the pavilion.

"Not that I ever heard of," said the pavilion's owner. "I think the country people invented the tale because there have always been so many rabbits and weasels and things found dead near it. And once a dog, my uncle's favourite spaniel. But, of course, that's simply because they get entangled in the Virginia creeper—you see how fine and big it is—and can't get out, and die as they do in traps. But the villagers prefer to think it's ghosts."

"I thought there was a real ghost story," Thesiger persisted.

Ernestine said, "A ghost story. How delicious! Do tell it, Mr. Doricourt. This is just the place for a ghost story. Out of doors and the sun shining, so that we can't *really* be frightened."

Doricourt protested again that he knew no story.

"That's because you never read, dear boy," said Eugene Thesiger. "That library of yours —there's a delightful book—did you never notice it?—brown tree-calf with your arms on it; the head of the house writes the history of the house as far as he knows it. There's a lot in that book. It began in Tudor times—1515, to be exact."

"Queen Elizabeth's time." Ernestine

thought that made it so much more interesting. "And was the ghost story in that?"

"It isn't exactly a ghost story," said Thesiger. "It's only that the pavilion seems to be an unlucky place to sleep in."

"Haunted?" Frederick asked, and added that he must look up that book.

"Not haunted exactly. Only several people who have slept the night there went on sleeping."

"Dead, he means," said Ernestine, and it was left for Amelia to ask:—

"Does the book tell anything particular about how the people died, what killed them, or anything?"

"There are suggestions," said Thesiger; "but there, it *is* a gloomy subject. I don't know why I started it. Should we have time for a game of croquet before tea, Doricourt?"

"I wish *you'd* read the book and tell me the stories," Ernestine said to Frederick, apart, over the croquet balls.

"I will," he answered, fervently; "you've only to tell me what you want."

"Or perhaps Mr. Thesiger will tell us another time—in the twilight. Since people like twilight for ghosts. Will you, Mr. Thesiger?" She spoke over her blue muslin shoulder.

Frederick certainly meant to look up the book, but he delayed till after supper, when he went alone to the library, found the brown book, and took it to the circle of light made by the colza lamp.

"I can skim through it in half an hour," he said, and wound up the lamp and lighted his cigar.

The earlier part of the book was written in the beautiful script of the early sixteenth century, that looks so plain and is so impossible to read, and the later pages, though the handwriting was clear and Italian enough, left Frederick helpless, for the language was Latin, and Frederick's Latin was limited to the particular passages he had "been through" at his private school. He recognized a word here and there—*mors*, for instance, and *pallidus* and *sanguinis* and *pavor* and *arcanum*, just as you or I might; but to read the complicated stuff and make sense of it! Frederick replaced the book on the shelf, closed the shutters, and turned out the lamp. He thought he would ask Thesiger to translate the thing, but then again he thought he wouldn't. So he went to bed wishing that he had happened to remember more of the Latin so painfully beaten into the best years of his boyhood.

And the story of the pavilion was, after all, told by Thesiger.

There was a little dance at Doricourt next evening, a carpet dance they called it. The furniture was pushed back against the walls, and the tightly-stretched Axminster carpet was not so bad to dance on as you might suppose. And even in those far-off days there were conservatories.

It was on the steps of the conservatory, not the steps leading from the dancing-room, but the steps leading to the garden, that the story was told. The four young people were sitting together, the girls' crinolined flounces spreading round them like huge pale roses, the young men correct in their high-shouldered coats and white cravats. Ernestine had been very kind to both the men, a little too kind perhaps—who can tell? At any rate, there was in their eyes exactly that light which you may imagine in the eyes of rival stags in the mating season. It was Ernestine who asked Frederick for the story, and Thesiger who, at Amelia's suggestion, told it.

"It's quite a number of stories," he said, "and yet it's really all the same story. The first man to sleep in the pavilion slept there ten years after it was built. He was a friend of the alchemist or astrologer who built it. He was found dead in the morning. There seemed to have been a struggle. His arms bore the marks of cords. No; they never found any cords. He died from loss of blood. There were curious wounds. That was all the rude leeches of the day could report to the bereaved survivors of the deceased."

"How funny you are, Mr. Thesiger!" said Ernestine, with that celebrated soft, low laugh of hers.

"And the next?" asked Amelia.

"The next was sixty years later. It was a visitor that time, too. And he was found dead, just the same marks, and the doctors said the same thing. And so it went on. There have been eight deaths altogether—unexplained deaths. Nobody has slept in it now for over a hundred years. People seem to have a prejudice against the place as a sleeping apartment. I can't think why."

"Isn't he simply killing?" Ernestine asked Amelia, who said:—

"And doesn't anyone know how it happened?"

No one answered till Ernestine repeated

"IT WAS ON THE STEPS OF THE CONSERVATORY THAT THE STORY WAS TOLD."

the question in the form of "I suppose it was just accident?"

"It was a curiously recurrent accident," said Thesiger, and Frederick, who throughout the conversation had said the right things at the right moment, remarked that it did not do to believe all these old legends. Most old families had them, he believed. Frederick had inherited Doricourt from an unknown great uncle of whom in life he had not so much as heard, but he was very strong on the family tradition. "I don't attach any importance to these tales myself."

"Of course not. All the same," said Thesiger, deliberately, "you wouldn't care to pass a night in that pavilion."

"No more would you," was all Frederick found on his lips.

"I admit that I shouldn't enjoy it," said Eugene; "but I'll bet you a hundred you don't *do* it."

"Done," said Frederick.

"Oh, Mr. Doricourt!" breathed Ernestine, a little shocked at betting "before ladies."

"Don't!" said Amelia, to whom, of course, no one paid any attention; "don't do it!"

You know how, in the midst of flower and leafage, a snake sometimes will suddenly, surprisingly rear a head that threatens? So, amid friendly talk and laughter, a sudden fierce antagonism sometimes looks out and vanishes again, surprising most of all the antagonists. This antagonism spoke in the tones of both men, and after Amelia had said "Don't!" there was a curiously breathless little silence. Ernestine broke it. "Oh," she said, "I do wonder which of you will win! I should like them both to win, wouldn't you, Amelia? Only I suppose that's not always possible, is it?"

Both gentlemen assured her that in the case of bets it was very rarely possible.

"Then I wish you wouldn't," said Ernestine. "You could *both* pass the night there, couldn't you, and be company for each other? I don't think betting for such large sums is quite the thing, do you, Amelia?"

Amelia said no, she didn't, but Eugene had already begun to say:—

"Let the bet be off, then, if Miss Meutys doesn't like it. That suggestion is invaluable. But the thing itself needn't be off. Look here, Doricourt. I'll stay in the pavilion from one to three and you from three to five. Then honour will be satisfied. How will that do?"

The snake had disappeared.

"Agreed," said Frederick, "and we can compare impressions afterwards. That will be quite interesting."

Then someone came and asked where they had all got to, and they went in and danced some more dances. Ernestine danced twice with Frederick and drank iced sherry and water, and they said good night and lighted their bedroom candles at the table in the hall.

"I do hope they won't," Amelia said, as the girls sat brushing their hair at the two large white muslin-frilled dressing-tables in the room they shared.

"Won't what?" said Ernestine, vigorous with the brush.

"Sleep in that hateful pavilion. I wish you'd ask them not to, Ernestine. They'd mind, if *you* asked them."

"Of course I will if you like, dear," said Ernestine, cordially. She was always the soul of good-nature. "But I don't think you ought to believe in ghost stories, not really."

"Why not?"

"Oh, because of the Bible and going to church and all that," said Ernestine.

"What was that?" said Amelia.

"That" was a sound coming from the little dressing-room. There was no light in that room. Amelia went into the little room, though Ernestine said, "Oh, don't! How can you? It might be a ghost or a rat or something," and as she went she whispered, "Hush!"

The window of the little room was open and she leaned out of it. The stone sill was cold to her elbows through her print dressing jacket.

Ernestine went on brushing her hair. Amelia heard a movement below the window and listened. "To-night will do," someone said.

"It's too late," said someone else.

"If you're afraid it will always be too late or too early," said someone. And it was Thesiger.

"You know I'm not afraid," the other one, who was Doricourt, answered hotly.

"An hour for each of us will satisfy honour," said Thesiger, carelessly. "The girls will expect it. I couldn't sleep. Let's do it now and get it over. Let's see. Oh, hang it!"

A faint click had sounded.

"Dropped my watch. I forgot the chain was loose. It's all right, though; glass not broken even. Well, are you game?"

"Oh, yes, if you insist. Shall I go first, or you?"

"I will," said Thesiger. "That's only fair, because I suggested it. I'll stay till half-past one or a quarter to two, and then you come on. See?"

"Oh, all right. I think it's silly, though," said Frederick.

Then the voices ceased. Amelia went back to the other girl.

"They're going to do it to-night."

"Are they, dear?" Ernestine was as placid as ever. "Do what?"

"Sleep in that horrible pavilion."

"How do you know?"

Amelia explained how she knew.

"Whatever can we do?" she added.

"Well, dear, suppose we go to bed?" suggested Ernestine, helpfully. "We shall hear all about it in the morning."

"But suppose anything happens?"

"What could happen?"

"Oh, *anything!*" said Amelia. "Oh, I do wish they wouldn't! I shall go down and ask them not to."

"*Amelia!*" The other girl was at last aroused. "You *couldn't!* I shouldn't *let* you dream of doing anything so unladylike. What would the gentlemen think of you?"

The question silenced Amelia, but she began to put on her so lately discarded bodice.

"I won't go if you think I oughtn't," she said.

"Forward and fast, auntie would call it," said the other. "I am almost sure she would."

"But I'll keep dressed. I sha'n't disturb you. I'll sit in the dressing-room. I *can't* go to sleep while he's running into this awful danger."

"Which he?" Ernestine's voice was very sharp. "And there isn't any danger."

"Yes, there is," said Amelia, sullenly, "and I mean *them*. Both of them."

Ernestine said her prayers and got into bed. She had put her hair in curl-papers, which became her like a wreath of white roses.

"I don't think auntie will be pleased," she said, "when she hears that you sat up all night watching young gentlemen. Good night, dear!"

"Good night, darling," said Amelia. "I know you don't understand. It's all right."

She sat in the dark by the dressing-room window. There was no sound to break the stillness, except the little cracklings of twigs and rustlings of leaves as birds or little night-wandering beasts moved in the shadows of the garden, and the sudden creakings that furniture makes if you sit alone with it and listen in the night's silence.

Amelia sat on and listened, listened. The pavilion showed in broken streaks of pale grey against the wood, that seemed to be clinging to it in dark patches. But that, she reminded herself, was only the creeper. She sat there for a very long time, not knowing how long a time it was. For anxiety is a poor chronometer, and the first ten minutes had seemed an hour. She had no watch. Ernestine had, and slept with it under her pillow. There was nothing to measure time's flight by, and she sat there rigid, straining her ears for a foot-fall on the grass, straining her eyes to see a figure come out of the dark pavilion and cross the dew-grey grass towards the house. And she heard nothing, saw nothing.

Slowly, imperceptibly, the grey of the dewy grass lightened, lightened; the grey of the sleeping trees took on faint dreams of colour. The sky turned faint above the trees, the moon perhaps was coming out. The pavilion grew more clearly visible. It seemed to Amelia that something moved among the leaves that surrounded it, and she looked to see him come out. But he did not come.

"I wish the moon would really shine," she told herself. And suddenly she knew that the sky was clear and that this growing light was not the moon's dead cold silver, but the growing light of dawn.

She went quickly into the other room, put her hand under the pillow of Ernestine, and drew out the little watch with the diamond "E" on it.

"A quarter to three," she said, aloud. Ernestine moved and grunted.

There was no hesitation about Amelia now. Without another thought for the ladylike and the really suitable, she lighted her candle and went quickly down the stairs, still dark, paused a moment in the hall, and so out through the front door into the grey of the new day. She passed along the terrace. The feet of Frederick protruded from the open French window of the smoking-room. She set down her candle on the terrace—it burned clearly enough in that clear air—went up to Frederick as he slept, his head between his shoulders and his hands loosely hanging, and shook him.

"Wake up!" she said. "Wake up! Something's happened! It's a quarter to three and he's not come back."

"Who's not what?" Frederick asked, sleepily.

"Mr. Thesiger. The pavilion."

"Thesiger?—the— *You*, Miss Davenant? I beg your pardon. I must have dropped off."

He got up unsteadily, gazing dully at this white apparition still in evening dress with pale hair now no longer wreathed.

"What is it?" he said; "is anybody ill?"

Briefly and very urgently Amelia told him what it was, imploring him to go at once and see what had happened. If he had been fully awake, her voice and her eyes would have told him many things.

"He said he'd come back," he said. "Hadn't I better wait? You go back to bed, Miss Davenant. If he doesn't come in half an hour——"

"If you don't go this minute," said Amelia, tensely, "I shall."

"Oh, well, if you insist," Frederick said. "He has simply fallen asleep as I did. Dear

"HE TOOK IT, LAUGHING KINDLY. 'HOW ROMANTIC YOU ARE!' HE SAID, ADMIRINGLY."

Miss Davenant, return to your room, I beg. In the morning, when we are all laughing at this false alarm, you will be glad to remember that Mr. Thesiger does not know of your anxiety."

"I hate you," said Amelia, gently; "and I am going to see what has happened. Come or not, as you like."

She caught up the silver candlestick, and he followed its steady gleam down the terrace steps and across the grey dewy grass.

Half-way she paused, lifted the hand that had been hidden among her muslin flounces, and held it out to him with a big Indian dagger in it.

"I got it out of the hall," she said. "If there's any *real* danger—anything living, I mean. I thought—but I know I couldn't use it. Will you take it?"

He took it, laughing kindly.

"How romantic you are!" he said, admiringly, and looked at her standing there in the mingled gold and grey of dawn and candle-light. It was as though he had never seen her before.

They reached the steps of the pavilion and stumbled up them. The door was closed, but not locked. And Amelia noticed that the trails of creeper had not been disturbed; they grew across the doorway as thick as a man's finger, some of them.

"He must have got in by one of the windows," Frederick said. "Your dagger comes in handy, Miss Davenant."

He slashed at the wet, sticky green stuff and put his shoulder to the door. It yielded at a touch and they went in.

The one candle lighted the pavilion hardly at all, and the dusky light that oozed in through the door and windows helped very little. And the silence was thick and heavy.

"Thesiger!" said Frederick, clearing his throat. "Thesiger! Halloa! Where are you?"

Thesiger did not say where he was. And then they saw.

There were low stone seats to the windows, and between the windows low stone benches ran. On one of these something dark, something dark and in places white, confused the outline of the carved stone.

"Thesiger!" said Frederick again, in the tone a man uses to a room that he is almost sure is empty. "Thesiger!"

But Amelia was bending over the bench. She was holding the candle crookedly, so that it flared and guttered.

"Is he there?" Frederick asked, following her; "is that him? Is he asleep?"

"Take the candle," said Amelia, and he took it obediently. Amelia was touching what lay on the bench. Suddenly she screamed. Just one scream, not very loud. But Frederick remembers just how it sounded. Sometimes he hears it in dreams and wakes moaning, though he is an old man now, and his old wife says, "What is it, dear?" and he says, "Nothing, my Ernestine, nothing."

Directly she had screamed she said, "He's dead," and fell on her knees by the bench. Frederick saw that she held something in her arms.

"Perhaps he isn't," she said. "Fetch someone from the house—brandy—send for a doctor. Oh, go, go, go!"

"I can't leave you here," said Frederick. "Suppose he revives?"

"He will not revive," said Amelia, dully; "go, go, go! Do as I tell you. Go! If you don't go," she added, suddenly and amazingly, "I believe I shall kill you. It's all your doing."

The astounding sharp injustice of this stung Frederick into action.

"I believe he's only fainted or something," he said. "When I've roused the house and everyone has witnessed your emotion you will regret——"

She sprang to her feet and caught the knife from him and raised it, awkwardly, clumsily, but with keen threatening, not to be mistaken or disregarded. Frederick went.

When Frederick came back with the groom and the gardener—he hadn't thought it well to disturb the ladies—the pavilion was filled full of white revealing daylight. On the bench lay a dead man, and kneeling by him a living woman on whose warm breast his cold and heavy head lay pillowed. The dead man's hands were full of green crushed leaves, and thick twining tendrils were about his wrists and throat. A wave of green seemed to have swept from the open window to the bench where he lay.

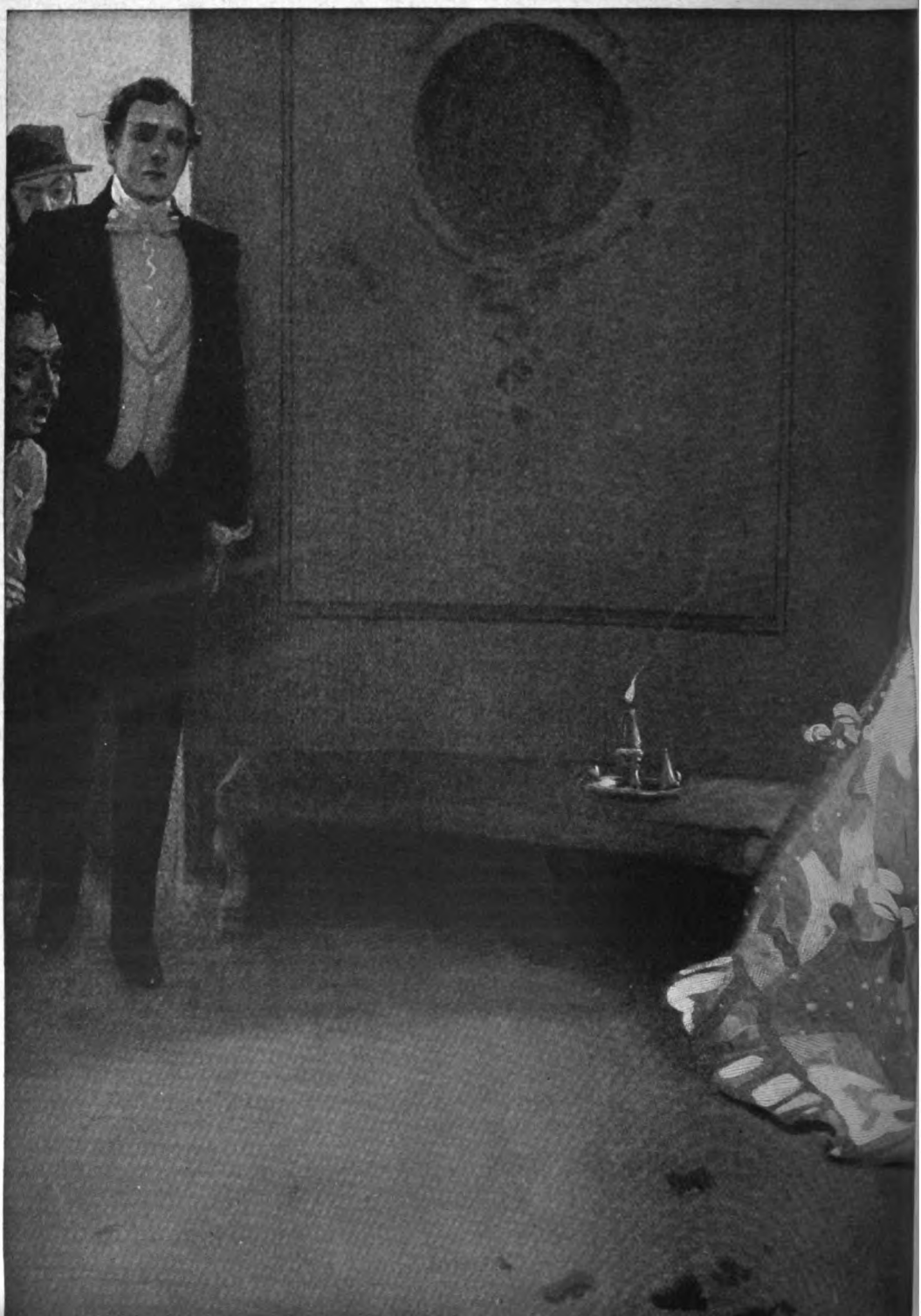
The groom and the gardener and the dead man's friend looked and looked.

"Looks like as if he'd got himself entangled in the creeper and lost 'is 'ead," said the groom, scratching his own.

"How'd the creeper get in, though? That's what I says." It was the gardener who said it.

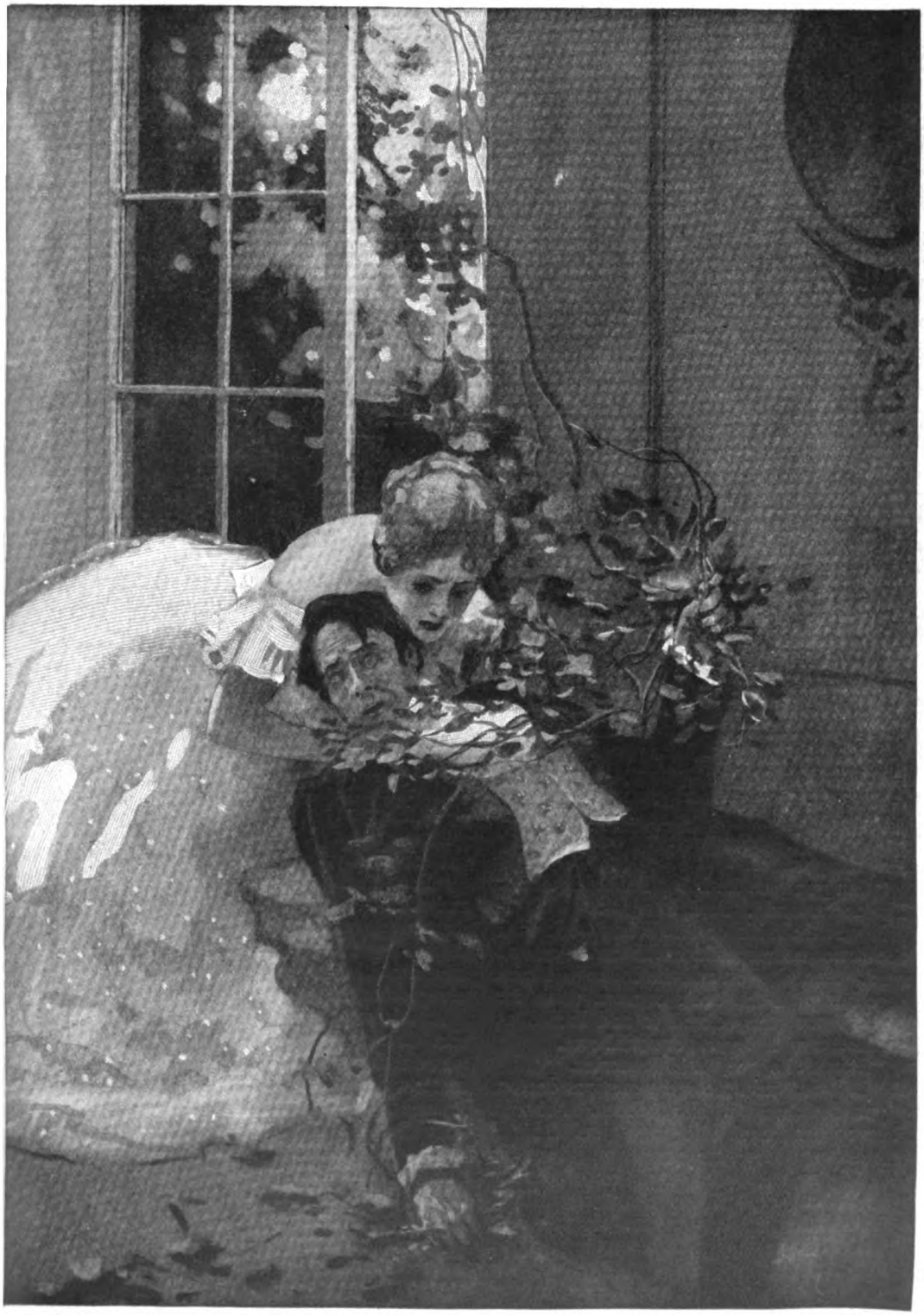
"Through the window," said Doricourt, moistening his lips with his tongue.

"The window was shut, though, when I come by at five last night," said the gardener, stubbornly. "'Ow did it get all that way since five?"



THE WOMAN NEVER SPOKE. SHE SAT THERE IN THE WHITE RING OF HER CRINOLINED DRESS LIKE A

E WOMAN NE



BROKEN WHITE ROSE. BUT HER ARMS WERE ROUND THESIGER, AND SHE WOULD NOT MOVE THEM."

They looked at each other voicing, silently, impossible things.

The woman never spoke. She sat there in the white ring of her crinolined dress like a broken white rose. But her arms were round Thesiger, and she would not move them.

When the doctor came he sent for Ernestine, who came flushed and sleepy-eyed and very frightened and shocked.

"You're upset, dear," she said to her friend, "and no wonder. How brave of you to come out with Mr. Doricourt to see what had happened! But you can't do anything now, dear. Come in and I'll tell them to get you some tea."

Amelia laughed, looked down at the face on her shoulder, laid the head back on the bench among the drooping green of the creeper, stooped over it, kissed it, and said to it quite quietly and gently, "Good-bye, dear; good-bye!" took Ernestine's arm, and went away with her.

The doctor made an examination and gave a death-certificate. "Heart-failure" was his original and brilliant diagnosis. The certificate said nothing, and Frederick said nothing of the creeper that was wound about the dead man's neck, nor of the little white wounds, like little bloodless lips half-open, that they found about the dead man's neck.

"An imaginative or uneducated person," said the doctor, "might suppose that the creeper had something to do with his death. But we mustn't encourage superstition. I will assist my man to prepare the body for its last sleep. Then we need not have any chattering women."

"Can you read Latin?" Frederick asked. The doctor could. And, later, did.

It was the Latin of that brown book with the Doricourt arms on it that Frederick wanted read. And when he and the doctor had been together with the book between them for three hours, they closed it and looked at each other with shy and doubtful eyes.

"It can't be true," said Frederick.

"If it is," said the more cautious doctor, "you don't want it talked about. I should destroy that book if I were you. And I should cut down the creeper and burn it and dig up the roots. It is quite evident, from what you tell me, that your friend believed that this creeper was a man-eater; that it fed, just before its flowering time, as the book tells us, at dawn; and that he fully meant that the thing, when it crawled into the pavilion seeking its prey, should find *you* and not him. It would have been so, I understand, if his watch had not stopped at one o'clock."

"He dropped it, you know," said Doricourt, like a man in a dream.

"All the cases in this book are the same," said the doctor; "the strangling, the white wounds. I have heard of such plants; I never believed." He shuddered. "Had your friend any spite against you? Any reason for wanting to get you out of the way?"

Frederick thought of Ernestine, of Thesiger's eyes on Ernestine, of her smile at him over her blue muslin shoulder.

"No," he said, "none. None whatever. It must have been accident. I am sure he did not know. He could not read Latin." He lied, being, after all, a gentleman; and Ernestine's name being sacred.

"The creeper seems to have been brought here and planted in Henry the Eighth's time. And then the thing began. It seems to have been at its flowering season that it needed the—that, in short, it was dangerous. The little animals and birds found dead near the pavilion. But to move itself all that way, across the floor! The thing must have been almost conscient," he said, with a sincere shudder. "One would think," he corrected himself at once, "that it knew what it was doing, if such a thing were not plainly contrary to the laws of Nature."

"Yes," said Frederick, "one would. I think if I can't do anything more I'll go and rest. Somehow all this has given me a turn. Poor Thesiger!"

His last thought before he went to sleep was one of pity.

"Poor Thesiger," he said; "how violent and wicked! And what an escape for me! I must never tell Ernestine. And all the time there was Amelia. Ernestine would never have done *that* for *me!*" And on a little pang of regret for the impossible he fell asleep.

Amelia went on living. She was not the sort that dies even of such a thing as happened to her on that night, when for the first and last time she held her love in her arms and knew him for the murderer he was. It was only the other day that she died, a very old woman. Ernestine, who, beloved and surrounded by children and grandchildren, survived her, spoke her epitaph. "Poor Amelia," she said; "nobody ever looked the same side of the road where she was. There was an indiscretion when she was young. Oh, nothing disgraceful, of course. She was a lady. But people talked. It was the sort of thing that stamps a girl, you know."

How I "Broke Into Print."

Being the Personal Statements of certain Well-known Authors explaining why they took to Literature as a Profession and how they first came to make a "Hit" with the Reading Public.

III.

RICHARD MARSH.

FEW authors had a wider public than Mr. Richard Marsh, whose recent death will be regretted by none more than by readers of this magazine. Mr. Marsh, whose Sam Briggs stories are now proving so popular in these pages, said :—

"I doubt if there was a time when I did not write—beginning, I do believe, with my first pair of knickerbockers. I used to lie awake at night telling myself stories; the following day I would write them down. The first real story I ever remember reading was Bunyan's 'Holy War,' and 'Robinson Crusoe'—the first part—immediately afterwards. 'Robinson Crusoe' enthralled me to such an extent that I actually rewrote his history. I must have been the merest child—I really doubt if I was in my teens—yet I sent the result to a boys' paper, which printed it and, what was much more, paid for it. I have the shadowiest recollections of the whole transaction. I don't remember the name of the publication; I only know that, even then, I did not like the look of it. It must have been quite a long yarn, running perhaps to some thousands of words, because it appeared in several instalments. The editor altered the title—and I dare say other things as well—it had nothing to do with Robinson Crusoe in his version—and my impression is that he paid me thirty shillings.

The Late RICHARD MARSH,

WHOSE FIRST PUBLISHED WORK RAN THROUGH SEVERAL INSTALMENTS OF A BOYS' PAPER AND BROUGHT HIM IN THIRTY SHILLINGS.

Photo. by J. Russell & Sons.

"The thirty shillings was quite a burden on my mind; it took the shape of a post-office order, and I could not get it cashed. I had had no experience of transactions of the kind, and I didn't know how to begin to turn it into money. I know I was haunted by the fear that if my relations found out what I had been doing the money might be taken from me altogether, or else doled out in instalments of, say, twopence a time. I must have held that post-office order some weeks before I was able to convert it into coin of the realm—and then that thirty shillings flew! I don't recall ever having read the story itself; I was so obsessed by the anxiety to get that thirty shillings—to get it, that is, before it was taken from me. I have contributed to most things

to which one can contribute since, but I doubt if anyone ever had an odder send-off than I did.

"Thirty shillings in those days represented to me fabulous wealth—how I did set my heart on having it for my very own!"

Mrs. DESMOND HUMPHREYS ("RITA").

Mrs. Desmond Humphreys, known to the literary world as "Rita," has many thousands of admirers on both sides of the Atlantic; one of her most ardent readers being Queen Mary, who recently ordered a complete set of her works. As "Rita" has at least fifty novels to her name and some of these are now out of print, it may be judged that there was no little difficulty in completing the order. Moreover, Her Majesty gave further signal proof of her admiration of "Rita's" stories by ordering a consignment to be forwarded to our brave soldiers in the trenches, and now many a "Tommy" varies the excitement of dodging shrapnel by dipping into the romantic pages of "Peg the Rake," "Souls," and others of "Rita's" fascinating works.

"I began to write," said the authoress to the writer recently, "when I was fourteen years of age, and for the one and only reason that is possible—namely, because I felt I *had* to write. The first thing to be accepted and published was a newspaper article. Oh, the excitement and ecstasy of that first acceptance! I feel the thrill to this day, and no subsequent success that I had ever *quite* equalled that moment. After that, of course, I tried my hand at other things—poetry and short stories—which usually came back. At sixteen I attempted a novel. A long novel. A novel which I fondly hoped would stamp me as one of the coming English writers. I sent it to one well-known publisher. It came back. I sent it to another, and again it was returned on my hands. My enthusiasm was a little damped. I read it over carefully once again, and in my youthful conceit could see nothing wrong with it. Possibly, I argued, the publishers hadn't seen it, or, rather, read it. So I packed it up once more and sent it to Sampson Low and Marston, of Fleet Street. Days went by. I heard nothing. I argued that delay could only mean one thing. They liked the story, and were carefully considering the expense of bringing it out! Finally I received a business-like letter saying that the reader had reported favourably on it, and if I would call arrangements could no doubt be made for its publication. Here was fame indeed! 'Arrangements' *were* made, and the book appeared. It brought me about twenty-five pounds and much adverse criticism. But what did I care? I persevered, and wrote on and on for various publishers. Two of them became bankrupt and a third involved me in legal proceedings before I could extricate myself or my manuscript.

Mrs. DESMOND HUMPHREYS,

BETTER KNOWN TO THE READING PUBLIC AS "RITA." MRS. HUMPHREYS WROTE HER FIRST NOVEL AT THE AGE OF SIXTEEN.

"Still undeterred, I wrote 'Sheba,' the story of my early youth in Australia (though not actually of my *personal* experience). This book, I am glad to remember, was an instantaneous success—so much so, in fact, that a sequel was demanded. After that it

was all plain sailing. I wrote on and on, with more or less success, gaining a name which has outlasted many who were my contemporaries, and whom I once envied.

"Possibly," continued the authoress, in reply to a further question, "'Peg the Rake' is the best known and most popular of my books. It was the forerunner of a series of Irish stories which were very successful, and which have run into an immense number of editions. 'Souls' ran it pretty closely, however, and gained me a reputation as a cynical critic of society and its vagaries which I had no desire to follow up. 'Souls' was written for a purpose, and, having fulfilled that purpose, there was no more to be said.

"Variation of theme and treatment are to me essential. My books are all unlike each other and always will be, for I detest 'groovy' writing and writers, and have always claimed absolute freedom in the mode and method of my work. I especially dislike writing 'serials,' for the reason that they drive out all literary individuality and are ruination to literary style. It is true that in my early days I served this sort of apprenticeship, writing for Charles Dickens, jun., who edited *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*. But he was an exceptional sort of editor, and gave me a 'free hand,' so to say. However, after his death these journals flickered out, and I preferred to publish my books *as* books.

"Like all writers, I have had vicissitudes. Spells of ill-luck or unexpected strokes of good fortune. That I have so large a list of published works to my name often astonishes other writers, but I lay no claim to special industry, for writing is to me second nature. While the mood or the inspiration lasts I am perfectly happy. It is never an effort, or I should long ago have laid down my pen and said 'adieu' instead of 'au revoir' to my writing-desk.

"I have often received letters from notable people and great people all over the world thanking me for the pleasure derived from my books, and paying me that greatest of all compliments—to an author—appreciation. It is tributes such as these that compensate a writer for all the toilsome struggles up the Hill Difficulty and bring forgetfulness of the evil days inseparable from all literary and artistic efforts."

JOSEPH CONRAD.

Many literary critics consider Joseph Conrad the foremost writer of English literature to-day. Had he been living, they would doubtless bracket Stevenson and Conrad together, for as "stylists" there is very little to choose between them. And yet it is only within very recent years that Conrad has become known and his work appreciated. It is said that the least the Polish writer will now sell a short story for is two hundred pounds, though less than five years ago the same work might have been obtained for an eighth of that sum.

Mr. Conrad has had a romantic career, and when the story of his life comes to be written *in extenso* it will be quite as marvellous as any of his imaginative works. But we are concerned with how he "broke into print," and the story is an interesting one. Less than twenty-five years ago—in 1893, to be exact—Conrad was chief mate of a sailing vessel called the *Torrens*, bound from London to Australia. Among the passengers was a Cambridge graduate named Jacques. Between Jacques and the chief mate a warm friendship sprang up, and one evening when they were chatting in the former's cabin on literary matters Conrad said, "Would it bore you very much to read something I have written? The handwriting isn't very distinct—I write a beastly fist—but I think you can make it out." Of course, the Cambridge man said he "would be delighted," and the chief mate took from his pocket a fairly substantial manuscript, explaining that it was an unfinished story. Jacques put it in his locker, and after the mate had left he lit his pipe with the intention of "turning in." Instead, however, he felt a keen desire to read Conrad's story, and, unearthing it once more, he read it carefully, and when it was finished he continued to smoke on contemplatively. He instinctively felt that he had that night been reading the work of a man who would one day achieve an envied position in English literature.

The next day the chief mate entered his cabin again, and somewhat bashfully asked his friend "what he thought of it." The Cambridge man, as he handed him back his manuscript, urgently begged him to finish the story.

"It is well worth while," he said, "and it will make a great tale when completed."

That story was "Almayer's Folly," and it was the first attempt Conrad ever made to "break into print." Many years, however, were to pass before that story was completed. Nine chapters only were written when Jacques first saw the manuscript, and when Conrad returned to England he made a trip to Poland, taking his unfinished story with him. At the Friedrichstrasse railway station in

Berlin Conrad lost his "Gladstone," containing the manuscript, and the story might never have seen the light had not an honest porter retrieved it for him. During his trip Conrad added a little to "Almayer's Folly." In Poland he wrote a little more. Whenever he had a spare hour he would add to it, and so the story progressed. On his return to England Conrad became manager of a waterside warehouse, and though this occupied a good deal of his attention he was still able to add another chapter or two to "Almayer's Folly." Then he went to sea for another three years, and his manuscript went with him. For weeks his ship lay "frozen fast in the river in the midst of Rouen," but he continued adding to his story, bit by bit, between interruptions by the third officer—a cheerful youth with a banjo—who, Mr. Conrad was once heard to remark, has "remained the only banjoist of his acquaintance." Five years after the first line of "Almayer's Folly" was written the story was completed, and a year later it was published. Mr. Conrad had no "hard luck" story to tell regarding its acceptance. The first publisher to whom he submitted his manuscript was, fortunately, a man of discrimination, and "Almayer's Folly" saw the light. It was not an overwhelming success, but it proved to the critics that a new star in the literary firmament had arisen, and—as events subsequently proved—one that was to increase in brilliancy and power. "Almayer's Folly" is probably the only work on record which has been written in the four corners of the earth—the Congo, the East Indies, Poland, England, Switzerland, France, and half a hundred other places. That Mr. Conrad has an especial affection for this story, which was written in such adverse and strange circumstances, is not to be wondered at, and if you ask him which of his novels is his favourite it is more than probable that he will mention "Almayer's Folly." For with it he "broke into print," and commenced a literary ascent which in a few short years was to land him at the top. In 1897 Mr. Conrad achieved his first real success with "The Nigger of the Narcissus." How great Conrad is to-day in the literary field is indicated in H. G. Wells's well-known essay on "The Contemporary Novel." Mr. Wells says: "One of my chief claims to distinction in the world is that I wrote the first long appreciative review of Joseph Conrad's work in the *Saturday Review*."

JOSEPH CONRAD,

WHO IS GENERALLY REGARDED AS ONE OF THE GREATEST WRITERS OF THE DAY. MR. CONRAD TOOK FIVE YEARS WRITING HIS FIRST NOVEL, "ALMAYER'S FOLLY."

Photo. Will Cadby.

MARJORIE BOWEN.

To write a "best seller" at the age of seventeen is not given to many authors. Yet this is what Marjorie Bowen did when she gave us "The Viper of Milan." And yet, having done this, the popular authoress affirmed that there was little or nothing to tell about herself. "I was trained as an artist," she said, "and wrote my first book, 'The Viper of Milan,' as a diversion, for I had always been very fond of history. I also had a secret ambition to see if an entertaining historical novel couldn't be written as everyone said that that genre was dead indeed. When the book was finished—I wrote it in a few weeks—my mother read it and, liking it, took the manuscript to a literary agent to see what he could do with it. I believe he showed it to every publisher in London, but not one would entertain its publication. 'Historical novels are too risky,' they said, although many expressed favourable comment on 'The Viper.' Finally it was taken by Alston Rivers, who shortly afterwards published it. One well-known publisher told me that he was certain no one would take the book unless I altered the tragic end. However, I did not do so, and somehow or other the book was a success at once, and has gone, I think, into about twenty editions.

"Since then I have been writing historical

MARJORIE BOWEN,

THE CELEBRATED WRITER OF ITALIAN AND DUTCH HISTORICAL NOVELS. MISS BOWEN'S MOST POPULAR BOOK, "THE VIPER OF MILAN," WAS WRITTEN WHILE THE AUTHORESS WAS STILL AT SCHOOL.

Photo. Bassano.

novels and short stories, mostly dealing with Italy or Holland. The latter country is my favourite, and my books dealing with William of Orange have all been translated into Dutch. They were found sufficiently accurate in history to be used as text-books in the schools. The Dutch were also kind enough to make me a member of the Leyden Literary Society, to which few foreigners and women belong."

JOHN GALSWORTHY.

Mr. John Galsworthy was twenty-eight before he began to write, went to Oxford, where he studied law, was called to the Bar in 1890, cordially disliked his profession, and threw it up to travel.

Galsworthy travelled off and on for two years — Canada, British Columbia, Russia, Australia, New Zealand, the Fiji Islands, and South Africa. On a sailing-ship voyage between Adelaide and the Cape he met the novelist, Joseph Conrad, then still a sailor. The two became fast friends, but it is a question whether the many talks they had under the stars during the night watches had anything to do with their taking up literature as a profession.

In 1898 Galsworthy's first novel was published under a pseudonym. His real entry into the world of literature was not made until the first edition of "The Island Pharisees" was published in 1904. With the publication in 1906 of "The Man of Property," he was looked upon as one of the coming literary men of England. In the same year, 1906, he wrote his first play, "The Silver Box," finished on Friday, sent in on Saturday, accepted on Monday, and played the following autumn and spring in London and New York. But though it stamped the author as a force to be reckoned with, it by no means marked an epoch in the history of the drama. From that time on his work has alternated between novels and plays, with a liberal sprinkling of short stories, essays, and verse. In his own view his best novels are "The Man of Property" and "The Dark Flower"; and his best plays "The Silver Box," "Strife," and "A Bit o' Love." Of his play "Justice" he says: "The play 'Justice,' pondered over for two years, was written in five weeks, August and September, 1909. Though it is true that, after being at pains to get at the truth, I regard the infliction of solitude on most prisoners as harmful and unnecessary torture, this drama was not, as some imagine, a conscious attempt to bring about certain definite reforms; it was an effort to present a picture of the general blindness of Justice."

The play is said to have instantly set afoot reforms of the English prison system. Solitary confinement has greatly decreased and

JOHN GALSWORTHY,

WHOSE PLAYS, "JUSTICE" AND "STRIFE," ARE AS WELL KNOWN AS HIS NOVELS, "FRATERNITY" AND "THE COUNTRY HOUSE."

Photo. Hoppé.

prisoners in England to-day enjoy rather more humane treatment than they did before Galsworthy wrote "Justice." The realism of the play gave rise to a foolish report that Galsworthy had spent a few months in an English prison to get the necessary "atmosphere." The writer has before him now a clipping from a New York paper purporting to give, in cable form, the "facts" of the way in which this "atmosphere" was obtained. Here it is:—

"London, May 23rd.—Officialdom has been doing much speculation as to the method by which John Galsworthy, author of 'Justice' and other works, managed to learn so much of English prison life. British officialdom prefers that such information should be kept secret, and does not encourage outside investigators. He put on old clothes, wrapped a brick in brown paper, took it under his arm, rambled down the street, stopped in front of a tempting-looking plate-glass window, heaved his bundle through it, and was promptly arrested. At the police-station he gave an assumed name, and the magistrate, in his turn, gave Galsworthy six months. That's how he found out what the inside of English prisons were like."

ROBERT W. CHAMBERS,

WHO IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED TO BE THE MOST POPULAR OF PRESENT-DAY AUTHORS.

Of such are the inventions of journalism!

Galsworthy loves country life—a liking to which his books bear witness—and nearly all his work has been written in rural surroundings. "For many years," he says, "I was very fond of shooting and racing. I gave up shooting because it got on my nerves. I still ride; and I would go to a race meeting any day if it were not for the din, for there is nothing alive quite so beautiful as a thoroughbred horse."

ROBERT W. CHAMBERS.

Mr. Robert W. Chambers is generally regarded as America's most popular novelist, and certainly he has figured more often among the "best sellers" than any other native writer. And yet it was only by a lucky chance that he did not become an artist instead of an author. His parents wanted him to be an artist, and even Robert himself had visions of a velvet coat and a gorgeous studio, so he went to the Art Students' League of New York, where he had for a fellow-student Mr. Charles Dana Gibson. The two became great friends, and after they had been "following" art for about a year Chambers and Gibson collected their sketches and journeyed to the offices of *Life*, where they offered their wares for whatever they were worth. The Art Editor examined the drawings of both with a critical eye. He handed Gibson back his sheaf with the equivalent of "Nothing doing," and then said, somewhat gloomily — possibly for financial reasons—that he could use the others. When they left the office and were on their way back to their respective dwellings Gibson bitterly declared that he would never make another drawing but devote himself to literature, while Chambers was equally determined to be a great artist. Fortunately, both men changed their minds, and now Gibson illustrates Chambers's stories, and

thus—to quote the magazines—the "biggest of all literary and artistic combinations" has been formed.

The "lucky chance" referred to, whereby Mr. Chambers turned aside from art and devoted himself to literature, occurred in Paris, where he had become a student at the École des Beaux Arts and was studying under Julian. Being naturally observant, Mr. Chambers absorbed all that took place in the Latin Quarter, and when he had finished his art studies for the day he would lay his brush aside and amuse himself by writing of the things which he had seen and heard in the Parisian Bohemia. Then when he returned to New York he collected these fragments, boiled them down to a conglomerate whole, and offered the results to a publisher. They were accepted for book-publication and duly appeared. Thus Mr. Chambers "broke into print," but the break was accompanied by so mild a crash that he received neither fame nor fortune through his initial effort. "Then," says the author, "I got a job on a New York paper as a space-writer. I was paid according to the amount of blank paper I covered, and I didn't find the work particularly congenial. I was still mighty fond of drawing, and when I was tired of writing—which was frequent—I drew instead, and the drawings—which were supposedly humorous—sometimes went in. I measured these up and claimed the same rate of pay as for written stuff. Everything went on all right for a week or two, but one day when I went to claim my pay envelope the cashier said to me: "They're on to you upstairs." I thought the matter over and decided to quit, which I did the following day.

"My most important 'break into print' was with a collection of short stories of a weird and uncanny character, entitled 'The King in Yellow,' which the public seemed to like. So flatteringly was it received, indeed, that it decided me to devote all my time to fiction, and so I have been writing ever since. I cannot say which of my books I prefer, because just as soon as I have finished a story I dislike it. I am continually trying to do something better, so that I presume my 'best' book never will be written."

Mr. Chambers gave this advice to the beginner some years ago, and it holds good to-day: "Have something to say and learn by experience how to say it. The important thing, to be sure, is something to say. The trouble with most people who try to write stories is that they have nothing to write about. Next—don't talk about it; do it. A writer can make his own market. It is the only way to do. Write what appeals to you and find a publisher who will take it. Don't go to a publisher and ask him what he wants. Make him want what you have to offer. If it is the real thing you won't have much difficulty. You will 'break into print' with your first effort."

Although Mr. Chambers has published over half a hundred books since the days of "The King in Yellow" he is not, so he says, a very rapid writer. And neither is he what one would call a "hard worker" compared with the average business man. All his stories he writes in long hand and in pencil, and his manuscripts are models of neatness. Every word is as distinct and clear as print, and his "copy" is a joy to the compositor. It is said that he never sits down to resume writing without first going over all that part of the story already written, polishing and refining it, so that really every page he writes is burnished a score of times before it is finally in shape for the printer. And he is a merciless amputator of his own work, frequently reducing a hundred-thousand-word novel to seventy or sixty thousand. Indeed, so great a mania has he for "cutting" that unless his publishers look after him carefully he would end by leaving only the title.

And though many people might not remember it, Mr. Chambers has also made an effort—several in fact—to break into the drama. Years ago, when Daly's Theatre was the Mecca of all true lovers of dramatic art, Mr. Augustin Daly asked Chambers to dramatize one of Scott's novels, and within a week "The Witch of Ellangowan" was produced, with Ada Rehan as Meg Merrilies. The play was a success and Daly was delighted, prophesying that Chambers would become America's leading dramatist if he persevered. Chambers was flattered and set to work to write an original play, but just as it was finished Daly died, and the author was so disheartened that he decided to eschew the drama and confine himself to books. And so he has continued to write novels ever since.

SAM BRIGGS BECOMES A SOLDIER.

XI.—On the Way Home.

By RICHARD MARSH.
Illustrated by Charles Pears.

IT was nearly five weeks before I realized that I was lying in a hospital in bed. I had had some dim notion of something of the kind before, but it was very vague. I had had a sort of idea that I was in a place where there weren't any bombs or things of that sort, and where I was more comfortable than I had ever been before—that was all. Then, one day, I must have opened my eyes unexpectedly wide, for the world had grown lighter; I could see quite well—I was in a big room crowded with people and all sorts of things, yet which was so still. Women were moving about, lots of women—queerly dressed. I couldn't think who they might be. Then I suddenly remembered—they were nurses. One of them came in front of me, paused, smiled; I could see distinctly that she smiled—as if waiting for me to speak. So I spoke.

"Halloa!" I said. She spoke back again.

"Halloa!" Presently she added, "Oh, Mr. Briggs, I am so glad to hear your voice, and to see you are well again."

It seems easy now, but it was not then, to understand what she meant. The sound of her voice was a strain; an unconscious effort was required to realize that she was speaking. It was a fatigue to know that there was such a thing as consciousness, as life. The conversation went no further.

Two days afterwards I spoke again. The conversation was between three. I was lying awake, taking an interest in what was going on around me. A man and a woman came along; the woman was the same one who had spoken to me before. I suppose she called his attention to my open eyes—so much as could be seen of them, because across the top of my head I wore a bandage.

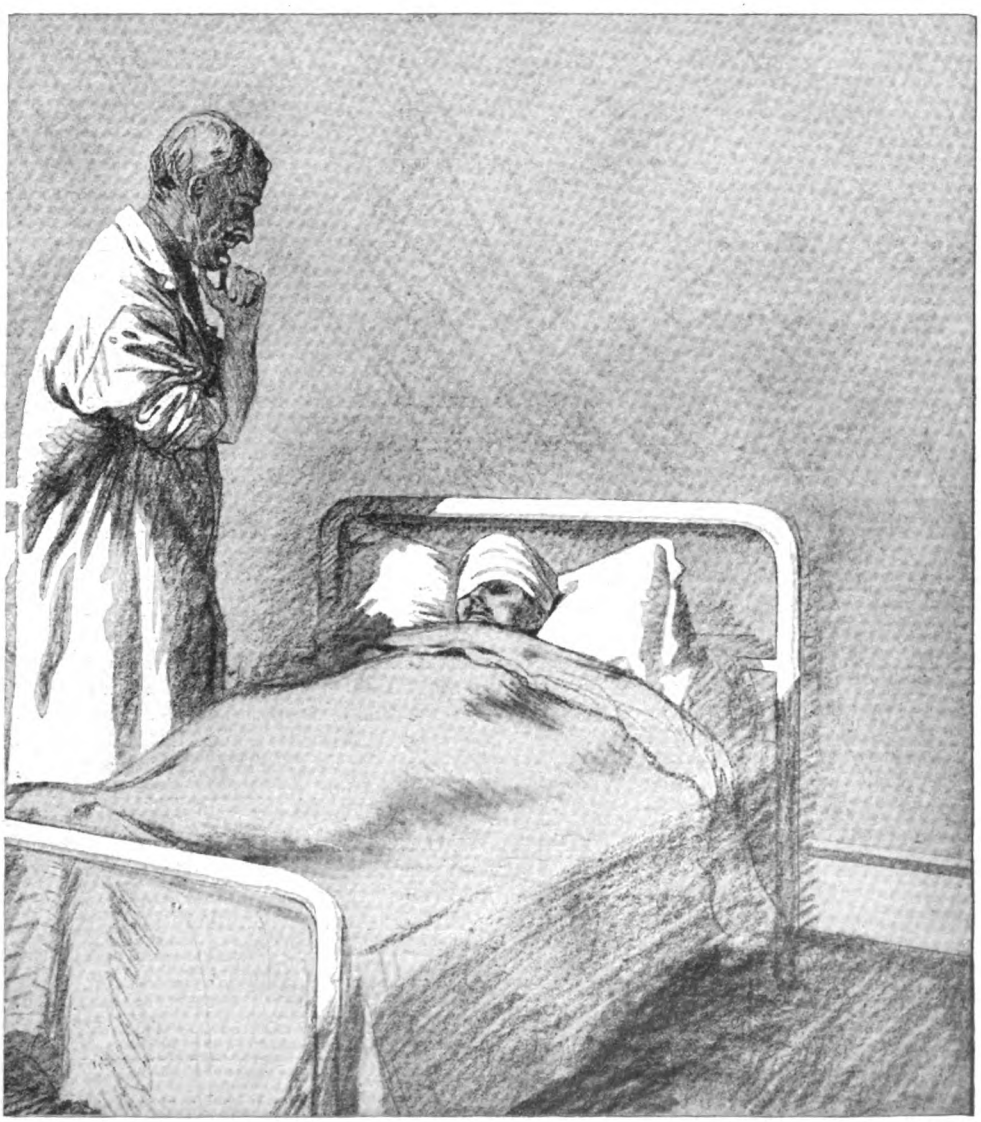
"I say, Briggs, this is a change! You are looking quite another man! Nurse

"I HAD A SORT OF IDEA THAT I WAS IN A PLACE COMFORTABLE THAN I

Fullerton, you and I are entitled to shake each other by the hand. Briggs, are you beginning to feel like a steak and tankard?"

I didn't know what he meant, but I dare say that without knowing it I smiled, because they both laughed. Later on I had a sort of idea of where the joke was meant to come in, and I dare say that then I really did smile, though it didn't seem to be much of a joke to me. I felt no more like eating a steak and drinking a tankard of beer than starting to dance round the room. I don't seem to remember much of what the doctor said; I remember better what nurse said when, later, she came back after he had gone.

"Do you know, Mr. Briggs," she began, "there have been a good many wounded men in here—thousands of them, I am told—and I understand that you have been the most remarkable case of the lot. Dr. Deming is very proud of you." I asked who Dr. Deming was. "That was Dr. Deming who was here this morning, and wanted to know if you felt like eating a steak. If you had seen yourself when I first saw you, you would understand better where in such an idea the



WHERE THERE WEREN'T ANY BOMBS OR THINGS OF THAT SORT, AND WHERE I WAS MORE HAD EVER BEEN BEFORE."

joke came and why he laughed. I'm told that when they first found you—they couldn't find you. That isn't meant for a joke, it's just a fact. You were all over the place. They began by finding ten or a dozen pieces —it was three days afterwards that the last piece of you was found. I believe Dr. Deming is going to keep a record of the case. People said it was no use trying to join the pieces together again; but Dr. Deming had his own way, and he joined you. It was more than a week afterwards when I saw you for the first time in this bed, and then I wasn't certain what you were. You were a mass of bandages, and then I couldn't tell what parts of you were here and what parts missing; I'm sure your own mother wouldn't have known you if she had been here. You couldn't feed yourself; it wasn't clear where your mouth began and ended. I've seen some pretty bad cases in my time, but not the like of yours. I never saw such a recovery before. Dr. Deming says he thinks you must be a remarkable man; I am sure of it."

Somehow it cheered me up to have her speak to me like that. I still didn't feel very grand. Directly she had gone I was asleep, before she was half-way down the ward. What is more, I slept, I do believe, for three more days on end. The next time I woke I was wider awake than I had been yet. The doctor was standing by the nurse's side.

"How are you, Briggs?" he began. "You seem to have some useful gifts; one is the gift of sleep. I am informed, also, that when occasion requires there are few men who beat you at keeping awake. What at present you require is sleep. It is the finest medicine you can possibly have—your steak and tankard promise to be on your bill of fare in less than no time. The day you get your V.C. I shall claim to have qualified for the D.S.O."

"Talking about the V.C.," I said to nurse, when the doctor had gone. "Did you ever hear such stuff? The fact is I have had no chance. There's a good deal of luck about that sort of thing; many a man gets the V.C. because the luck is on his side. There's many a chap who can't help saving someone. I don't mean to say that there isn't pluck about it, but you can't save a chap if, so to speak, there isn't one to save. I've just had to be content to rub along—as most of us do."

"Is that so?" She looked at me with what you might call a twinkle in her eye; my sight was rapidly improving, and I particularly noticed the twinkle. "You have no idea what funny stories I've been hearing. Only the other day I heard someone say, 'Jolly hard luck if Briggs does go under. Think of the record he's got—another V.C. gone wrong.'"

The woman was really going a bit too far; I had to stop her short.

"Steady! Steady! I don't think I've got as many pieces missing now as perhaps you think. That man who spoke like that was pulling your leg."

"Maybe; I don't know. I can only tell you what he said. It's well known that anyone can practise on my simplicity. I only know that he said something about trenches being taken without a drop of blood being spilt; about some wonderful battery being destroyed; about gas killing a whole countryside full of Germans; about more gas which destroyed seventy other Germans, and goodness knows how many more besides —a feat which landed you here. Of course, there may be people who think nothing of anything; it all depends upon the way the story's told. I suppose you think no one deserves the Victoria Cross?"

That time I didn't go to sleep directly she left me. I started thinking. Was there really anything in what she said? I had felt more than once that as a soldier I had been a failure. Of course, I never expected to be a success; a chap like me isn't likely to be much good on the field of battle. But all the same I felt that I might be able to do my bit, so that I might tell my people all about it when we did meet, especially Dora. I had an idea that Dora was expecting a lot. There had been sentences in her letters which showed that she might be expecting a good deal more than she was ever likely to get. She might be disappointed when she learnt that I wasn't mentioned in despatches. I had a sort of feeling that I had wasted my time if I hadn't done as much as that.

Of course, I knew perfectly well that there wasn't much in what nurse had been saying, but even if there was something, how Dora would look at me then, and mother, and dad! As a matter of fact, I was perfectly well aware that I hadn't the slightest right to pay the least attention to what anyone had said, but all the same I do not mind owning that when I did go to sleep I could not help dreaming of nurse.

The very next day I had a startler. I was lying half awake, half sleeping, when all at once I caught sight of a figure which was

moving on the other side of the room, a figure which was moving towards me. I tell you that then I was wide awake enough in half a brace of shakes. Both my eyes were still partly bandaged, and I couldn't see so well as I might, but if that wasn't Louisa—my sister Louisa—who was crossing the room, then I was still as good as blind. But what her appearance there meant was beyond me altogether. I had been better for days and days; if she had been about the place, why hadn't someone mentioned her name? And where were the rest, my old mother, and dad, to say nothing of Dora? I couldn't understand it in the least.

I half sat up, though it was still as much as I could do to move. I suppose I did it unintentionally, but I fancy that when I did move I called out her name, "Louisa!" louder perhaps than I imagined.

"Louisa," I said, "whatever are you doing here?"

"Oh, Sam!" she answered, as she came round to me. She had a lot of things in her hands, and she let some of them drop. "To think of it's being you."

"Why, whoever did you think it was?" There was something about the way she spoke which gave me a sort of feeling. "Who did you expect to see if it wasn't me?"

"Of course, Sam, I didn't expect to see anyone except you, but I didn't expect to see you as well as this."

"Why, didn't they tell you?"

"Tell me? Who should have told me? Tell me what?"

"Hasn't nurse told you that I'm so much better, and am talking about getting up?"

"Talking about getting up! Sam, since whenever is that? And, mind you, you're looking like getting up compared to what you did when I saw you last."

"Why, I've been getting better for days and days. When did you see me last?"

"Well, it must have been nearly a fortnight ago."

Something about her manner and the sort of confusion she was getting herself into made me stare. I don't like to say it about my own sister, but I sometimes have a sort of feeling that there are ways which are dark about Louisa, and I had reasons of my own for feeling sore just then.

"But, Louisa, wherever have you been all that time? I didn't know you were within a hundred miles of this."

I was pretty nearly sure she didn't like to have to answer questions; it is a way she has.

"I've been with Netta."

"Netta! Who's Netta?"

"Netta! Netta Swerts! Surely you haven't forgotten her already, considering the way she seems to have saved your life. She's in the hospital at Henloo. Although she hasn't been so bad as you, nothing like, she has been bad enough, and she's got a nasty scar across her face which looks as if it will never go. She does little else but talk about you all day. It seems that she was rushing down to do you a good turn—another—when you blew the place up with all those Germans."

"I blew the place up!" I stared; she stared back.

"You blew the place up. If you didn't, who did? Why, Sam, all the world is talking about your bravery. It seems that Netta was caught in the tail of the explosion. She thought that no one would ever see anything of you again."

"But how came you to know anything about Netta? Who told you anything about her?"

An odd look came on to Louisa's face, one which somehow made me feel uncomfortable. I'm sure that it required an effort to enable her to speak with that air of take-it-for-granted indifference.

"Oh, of course, it was Mr. Sparrow—Bob—who did that. He has told me everything, and has been looking after me all the time."

When she said that I dropped back upon the bed. When I first saw her walking along the ward I had had a feeling that there was something funny. Now I saw the whole thing, or at least I began to. And just as I was starting to speak Sparrow himself came along; he came at seven or eight miles an hour.

"Why, Sam," he began, "here's news! Everyone is talking. It seems that you are as good as on the discharge list."

"Is that all everyone's talking about? I suppose nobody has been coupling her with you? I wasn't aware that she even had your acquaintance. If you came to see me, Louisa, why didn't you stay and do it? I didn't know that even a line had come from you, or from mother, or from anyone."

"Why, Sam, you goose, there have been a sackful of inquiries made about you; but it has been like this. When I heard about Netta and the trouble she was in, they told me here that it might be weeks before you regained conscicusness, and goodness knows how long before you were able to speak a sensible sentence; and

"SO YOU'VE GOT SAM'S INQUIRIES; LOOKS AS IF THEY WOULD TAKE HIM A FEW MINUTES TO GET THROUGH."

really, Sam, it doesn't seem as though they were so very far wrong. If you only knew how I looked forward to meeting you again, and then this is the sort of meeting we have! I could cry!"

She looked as if she would do it, too; it made me feel quite uncomfortable.

"It wasn't as though there was anything for me to do here. Talk about women being wanted—they aren't. I believe, if they wanted them, they might get three or four nurses to every patient—trained nurses, not raw hands like me, who, anyhow, would be more nuisance than they were worth. I have used my eyes, and I can see that there are a good many of that sort about. I didn't know what to do. I wanted to go back, but, as we had arranged that I was to stay and watch—and you know, Sam, what I have been doing isn't done for nothing—I thought I had better stop and make the best of things."

"Make the best of things!"

"You make me say it. I was getting so sick of it—there's a lot of monotony in a place like this—that I was glad to jump at Mr. Sparrow's suggestion that I should go and see Netta. I've been staying with Netta's mother, who is living not far off, and I've been learning both French and Flemish. But as it seems so difficult to get any news, I thought I would come and see for myself what news there was. And, oh, Sam, do say that you're glad to see me!"

Of course I said what she wished me to, and I *was* glad to see her, goodness knows!

"I'll go and get your letters," she said, "and then you'll see for yourself if anyone has been making inquiries."

Louisa came back with a man behind her who was carrying one of those canvas bags in which they keep letters and parcels. Bob spoke to her. "So you've got Sam's

inquiries; looks as if they would take him a few minutes to get through."

The man put down the canvas bag, which was as nearly full as it need be. Beside it Louisa laid a number of letters.

"There," she said, "that lot will keep you occupied for a few spare moments. When they know at home how much better you are, you will find it won't be long before you hear from them. My dear Sam, you'll have no idea until you've opened some of those how important a man you are."

I had not, that's a fact. Off went Louisa with Bob and the chap who had carried the bag, and I was left alone to tackle the bag. Silly stuff some of its contents were. From all parts of the world some of it came; I never before realized what it meant to get your name into a newspaper. How it came about I couldn't understand. There didn't seem to be a place in the world where they hadn't heard about Sam Briggs. Rubbishy stuff and nonsense most of it was, but just think of what it must mean if a real soldier does a really fine thing! Who had sent me some of the papers, I couldn't think; there was just the paper with the address—"Sergeant Samuel Briggs," and my regimental number—and a marked paragraph inside telling something wonderful about me—not correctly once in half-a-dozen times. Sometimes there were comments in the column—comments such as "What it is to be a brave man!" "If only we girls could have a chance!"—and observations of that kind, which one could only regard as in the nature of hints. Sometimes photographs were enclosed of perfectly unknown young ladies; sometimes a hope was expressed that one day the "hero" might be met. I was the "hero"! That did tickle me when I was called a "hero" by a lady who might be twenty stone and sixty years old!

Then there were letters, half a peck; it was quite impossible for me to think of reading them. I felt, somehow, that it wasn't fair even to look inside, considering the position in which we stood towards each other, and the things they said. Somehow I couldn't help feeling that a large number were looking out for "heroes" of their own.

Then there were letters from people I knew, friends of my own. Even then I didn't know sometimes if the writer was in jest or earnest, especially when it was a man who was writing—and pretty often it was.

"What-ho! Sam, old boy! I always did think that there must be something in you, but, as a bright, shining example of courage in the British Army, you do want focusing. I was speaking about you to another friend of yours only the other day, and the remark he made was this: 'Cheese it; Sam Briggs is all right in his way, but when you talk about his having done for the whole German army, as it were single-handed, I must ask you not to regard me as one of the army of mites.'"

That was one of the observations which came to me among the inquiries—and quite right, too! When I thought of some of the incidents which had taken place between me and the chap who wrote that letter, I did hope that he would not be among the first lot of chaps I should knock up against when I got home. Of course they weren't all of them so bad as that, nothing like! All the same, they did make a fellow think. You should hear the sort of stuff some of the chaps talk, when they are in the trenches or somewhere, and are a bit fed up; because, you know, it is quite easy to get fed up even out in the trenches when you have done nothing else except get wet and cold for days and weeks—I don't know how long! It isn't the exciting part of a soldier's life which a chap seems to notice, it's the waste of his own time, and things like that, when for weeks together nothing happens, as I have known it do. Then he wonders what he's there for, anyhow. What's the use of him? What does anybody care?

It seemed from my inquiries that a good many people cared all the time, that there wasn't an hour of a day or night when Great Britain wasn't caring. When in those dreary trenches so many of her fighting men were sick and tired unto death, in a sense that was the time when Great Britain—Greater Britain—in so many parts of the world, cared most. Fancy a chap like me, a worthless unit among a million finer men, being inundated with inquiries. Never again should I be sick and tired at the bottom of the coldest and wettest trench, and feel that I was wasting my time.

I didn't sleep much that night. Getting through my mail was out of the question, though Louisa came in and lent me a hand, and Bob, and even nurse. There was a great deal of talking, and most of the ward joined in; of course, it was irregular, but when Dr. Deming came along and did nothing to stop it—why, there you were! I don't think anyone was a penny the worse. I noticed that both the doctor and nurse had keen eyes to see that none of the patients were

likely to suffer. I believe that the little jobation did all of us good ; I know it did me. I heard things about the great world outside of which I had known very little for months, and which were exactly what I wanted to hear. The talk kind of gave the inside of my head a freshener.

My word ! there was some news in the morning ! There is that to be said about being in the fighting-line—you feel that if there is anything to be heard anywhere you are right in the middle of it. But my news was personal. First of all there was a telegram from Dora—and the rest of them. I don't know what time it reached me, but it was before the regular time. The sort of confused language Dora used ! She seemed to be too surprised to telegraph plainly.

" Louisa's telegram surprised me more than I can say." Then there was a pair of them ! It was just as well that Dora was telegraphing at some special rate, or that wire would have broken her. " I thought you weren't going to be conscious for months and months, and now it seems you are almost well again." I certainly wasn't quite that. If Louisa had said that, then she was going a good bit further than she ought to do. " You must be a wonderful person ; yes, but you seemed to be that all through. When I read Louisa's telegram to father he said that you seemed as if you ought to be a son-in-law any man could be proud of ; you never seemed to do anything as other men did it ; there was something remarkable even about the way you had of getting well. Think of father talking like that ! "

I couldn't think. Mr. Alexander Wilkinson wasn't at all the sort of person I fancied talking like that. He was a good man of business, Mr. Wilkinson was, and until I joined he never struck me as being very keen about my acquaintance, to say nothing about my marrying Dora. Something must have taken him badly if that was the sort of thing he was trying for a change.

" You are going to make his fortune, Sam, that is what you are going to do," the telegram went on. I began to understand. Mr. Alexander Wilkinson wasn't so absolutely insane as I had fancied. " He is using you," wired Dora, " as the finest advertisement that ever came his way. You know those threepenny smokes of his, ' Britain's Brightest ' ? You should see how he is advertising them. It seems that he sent you a box just as you were going away, and that you acknowledged them. That recognition of yours was worth to him—I don't know what it wasn't worth. You must have been in a big hurry. It looks as if it were written on half a sheet of common paper picked up anywhere. He has had it photographed in twenty different ways—some of them do make pictures ! You should see one of them which he calls ' Britain's Brightest in the Trenches. Britain's Hero Smokes some in the Trenches.' Underneath there is a picture of you, a photograph it looks like, only there is not the slightest resemblance, in an overcoat, your hat on the back of your head, sitting down goodness knows where, in the pouring rain, a very big cigar in your mouth, smoking and writing for all you're worth. And this is what you are writing—think of it ! ' You remember that box of cigars you gave me—I am smoking one of them now. They have one thing in common with Dora, they can cheer a man up in any weather.' Fancy your writing a thing like that ! Did you ever do it ? —for publication ! Anyhow, people are beginning to see it on every wall in London, and underneath, in a smaller size, is a girl's head—' Dora.' Nice for me ; but father says it is going to make his fortune. He wants to make you a partner."

Did he ? Well, anyhow, there was something practical about that. It struck me so forcibly that I actually put that telegram down in what you might call the middle. There is money in most things if properly worked. I once heard a man say—a keen hand he was !—that there wasn't an article his wife had on out of which he couldn't make a fortune if he could only get it properly worked. " Britain's Brightest," " the National Hero "—handle them together—at any rate there might be a trifle for the " hero." It looked as if the respect I had always had for my future father-in-law wasn't likely to diminish.

The inquiries of yesterday had some of them done me good ; a great deal of Dora's telegram, in a manner of speaking, was doing me better, even the business part of it. When I read that part—well, I was properly grateful that I had been blown into a thousand pieces. I began to understand that dying for your country is great, and if you don't quite die, why, of course, it is better still. And Dora has such a way of putting herself into words. She had a way of expressing herself which made me feel that I was the happiest man on earth. And as soon as she could get away she was coming to see me ! The way she expressed herself upon that point—oh, it was great ! I had been feeling what an utter failure I was because I had done nothing for

my country—worth talking about. That didn't seem to be Dora's opinion. As she told me, quite frankly, the only thing to which she was looking forward was the moment of our meeting. It did me good to read her words.

When a young man has jogged along through life, glad enough to be able to just make bread and cheese and for a chance of keeping a roof of some sort above his head, and is placed suddenly in the position of national hero, with a dear little girl like Dora saying the things she had to telegraph because she couldn't wait to utter them by word of mouth, that is a condition of affairs which only one man in ten million appreciates, because he is about the only one who gets the chance.

I suppose I was still pretty sleepy when they brought that telegram to me in bed. I know that I must have dropped asleep before I reached the end. I was very far from being the well man Louisa seemed to have suggested I was. I was still in that state in which a man doesn't even know that for him real happiness is slumber. I suppose that when nurse came along she found me fast asleep. I feel sure she didn't try to wake me; she would have found it difficult if she had. She just turned me over in bed, made a neat parcel of that unfinished telegram, and left me there to sleep it out. And how long do you think it took me to do it? Two days and nights—just upon!

I wonder what she said to inquirers and to the doctor? I dare say she herself had had a peep into that telegram. She was only human—and a woman. I don't care what she did. Parts of that telegram left lying about anyhow must have been very tempting. I dare say she told Louisa some of what that telegram contained, and she passed it on to Sparrow. And somehow it got round to Deming. Things do get round! I dare say that all over that hospital, and a bit farther, things were being whispered. Sergeant Briggs was a pretty famous man. I fancy he wasn't any less famous when the whispers were done.

On the Tuesday morning I had that telegram; on Wednesday I was still asleep, waking only, it seemed, for a few passing minutes. The impression on my mind was that I only just opened my eyes and shut them again. I doubt if afterwards I was quite awake or asleep; I was just in a state of bliss—and on the Thursday I was wide awake. The ward was full of people. Patients were being made ready, nurses were engaged in various duties, doctors were coming and going, all sorts of people were there—and I was wide awake. Louisa was sitting on the side of the bed. Sparrow was there with his face all smiles. I was conscious of that in a second—Sparrow seemed to be always smiling. A couple of orderlies had letter-bags in their hands. One of them had a letter. Nurse seemed to be eyeing it askance, as if in two minds what to do with it. Dr. Deming seemed to have suddenly woke to the consciousness that at any rate for the present sleep had gone. He proclaimed the fact.

"Halloa, Briggs! Then you've slept it out for the present? So, nurse, this is an answer to your question. Sergeant Briggs has slept it out. Orderly, give Sergeant Briggs his letter—now he may be able to read it. Now, you people, don't you bother the sergeant. Perhaps he feels more disposed to be left alone. Nurse, don't you let them disturb him."

The words seemed to be a joke; I felt as if I had slept it out until the end of my life. Louisa came cutting in.

"Sam, I never saw anyone like you for sleep! That was a sleep, if you like! Here's Dora's wire, which I don't believe you ever finished reading, and here are two more come since. There's another bundle of letters, and there's something official the orderly has brought this morning. Orderly, let the sergeant have it."

The orderly let me have it. In his turn he was smiling—everyone seemed to be in a smiling mood.

"News from the War Office, Sergeant Briggs. They've made you Commander-in-Chief; there's lots of that sort of thing going about just now. When you get one of those documents you never know what it contains."

No, you don't know, and sometimes if you do you don't half understand. It's a bit upsetting, especially when the news is as startling as that news was. Louisa was the first to notice my face. She's got eyes, that girl has!

"Has the War Office really distinguished itself this time?"

"It's all very well for you to laugh, Louisa, and laugh you may; but the War Office has appointed me to His Majesty's commission. Lieutenant Briggs I am, of the Ninth Royal British Rifles. That's what I call a bit startling."

(*To be concluded.*)

Among My Drawings.

A CHAT ABOUT COLLECTING.

By WALTER EMANUEL.

HAVE been a collector since my early days. It started, I fancy, with marbles and stamps, and later I rose to books, prints, and drawings—anything, in fact, which had an art interest.

I even have a collection of picture-post-cards. Picture-postcards are rightly despised to-day, but, when they first appeared, many of those which were published on the Continent were veritable works of art—miniature colour prints well worth possessing—and my little collection has come as a surprise to many an artist.

I have never been able to ascertain whence I got my taste for collecting. It is rumoured that a certain ancestor of mine was a tax-collector. This, however, I am disinclined to believe, as, to my knowledge, he died a poor man. Certain it is that I was interested in art and artists at a very tender age, for one of my earliest recollections is getting into serious trouble for asking a lady visitor whether she painted. It seems that her exceptionally brilliant complexion was a subject of debate among her friends, and I, poor innocent, was promptly sent to bed.

Of all my collections, the one I prize most are my black-and-white drawings, of which I have one or two hundred.

It was when I was a bachelor, without the responsibilities of a married man, that I laid the foundation of my collection. And, when I came to set up house, I was extraordinarily glad that I had not wasted all my substance on purely ephemeral pleasures, for it is good to have pictures to hang on one's walls.

By the way, a lady friend who was looking over my flat one day remarked, "What a lot of pictures!" "Yes," I said; "it is a horrid house for picture-haters, isn't it, for there are pictures everywhere." "Oh, but *are* there such people as picture-haters?" she asked, naively. Though, as a matter of fact, I dare say there are such persons, for I know at least one lady living in London who does not like scenery. And a distinguished artist once told me that he did not care for music. His father was the same, he said. Once, when asked whether he liked music, he replied that he "disliked noise of any kind."

I have often thought that it must be a great nuisance to have sufficient money to enable you to buy whatever you want. The result, if you were an art-lover, would be that you would soon get an accumulation of pictures whose arrangement would baffle you, for, of course, you must not have too many on your walls, or the place will look like a Royal Academy. Strictly, a room ought to have only a few pictures, and those rightly placed—though they might well be changed now and then. The object of pictures should never be to cover walls, but to decorate them. Still, I would like to have sufficient money to enable me to back my opinions by buying paintings by such of the younger artists as in my opinion are going to be winners.

However, the man of limited means can get many works of art well worth having—as I think my collection will prove. Most of my specimens have been acquired in the ordinary way. Some have been found in the most unlikely places. Occasionally, of course, one is "had." You will show an expert a little Rembrandt which you picked up in a dirty little shop for half a crown, and he will inform you that it is worth double.

Yes, now and then you will discover that one of your possessions is not an original, and it has to be given away as a wedding-present. Forgeries of black-and-whites are not uncommon. Phil May, for instance, is an immortal in the sense that he is still producing work to-day. Even in his lifetime dishonourable artists stole his style. Himself, he took it good-humouredly. I remember that in my presence once, in turning over the leaves of a comic paper, he came across one of these forgeries. "Halloa, here's another of me!" was all he said. The work of Aubrey Beardsley, again, is frequently counterfeited, owing to the fact that he was not prolific in his short life, and there is now a great demand for his work, his artistic reputation having steadily advanced here and on the Continent.

While there are many different styles repre-

"SENSITIVE."

"AND YOU'VE NO IDEA HOW TOUCHY HE IS, DEAR. HE LEFT LAURA AND ME ON THE PARADE IN A TREMENDOUS HUFF BECAUSE WE SAID WE LIKED TO WALK WITH AN OBJECT."

By CHARLES KEENE.

sented in my collection, I have no example of post-impressionism, the reason being that it seems to me that the masters of this art, when they are not funny without being vulgar, are vulgar without being funny.

One of the greatest black-and-white artists of all times was Charles Keene, of *Punch*. For their unexceptionable draughtsmanship, straightforward simplicity, and wonderful characterization, his drawings have never been beaten. In one respect, Charles Keene was a strange anomaly. He was a great humorist who never made a joke in his life. I believe that not one of the jests he illustrated in *Punch* was his own: they were all contributed by friends. Yet he was none the less a great humorist. He added immensely to the humour of the joke he illustrated, and the joke and the drawing became an indissoluble unity. I am fortunate enough to possess a number of drawings by Charles Keene—most of them rough sketches for more elaborate illustrations. In the case of *Punch* the artist would draw straight on to the wood block, which would then be cut away to enable the reproductions to be made, and the only originals remaining would be the rough sketches such as I possess. The one entitled "Sensitive," reproduced above, explains itself by reason of the legend. It is an interesting specimen of a fine nervous drawing; rough as it is, there is huff in every line of the little gentleman's back.

The original of Mr. Partridge's amusing parody of the Velazquez in the National Gallery is no doubt familiar to most Londoners.

The specimens of Phil May's work are, I think, characteristic ones. "'Arriet"—a subject of which he never tired—has never been drawn more wittily. And "The Niggers at Brighton," in addition to its interest as a drawing, has quite an historical value in view of the fact that niggers are now extinct

AMUSING PARODY OF ONE OF THE PAINTINGS BY VELAZQUEZ IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

By BERNARD PARTRIDGE.

monsters—done to death by pierrots. To my regret, for I always loved the cheery fellows. Indeed, one of the earliest authentic anecdotes about myself is to the effect that once, when, as a small boy, I was asked whether I would like to go and hear "The Messiah,"

"THE NIGGERS AT BRIGHTON."
By PHIL MAY.

"'ARRIET."
By PHIL MAY.

I replied, in my little piping voice, that, please, I'd prefer the niggers. They were an early passion of mine, though my admiration was always mingled with a secret fear lest one of them should speak to me.

As Mr. Max Beerbohm is still our only caricaturist in the most correct sense of the word I am not a little pleased to own the portrait of himself by himself which is reproduced here. I am sorry to say that he has since grown a moustache, to a great loss of whimsicality of appearance.

CARICATURE OF HIMSELF.
By MAX BEERBOHM.

Mr. Arthur Rackham's sketch, "How It Feels to Draw in Public," came about in this

"HOW IT FEELS TO DRAW IN PUBLIC."
By ARTHUR RACKHAM.

way. My wife has an artists' autograph-book, and Mr. Rackham was looking through the drawings one evening after dinner at my house, when he asked for a pencil, and drew an impression of himself as he felt with the eyes of the other guests watching him.

"THE TEMPTATION OF ST. ANTHONY."
By H. GERBAULT.

Mr. Dudley Hardy's drawing of "The Busy Waiter" is a very happy example of one side of the art of a most versatile artist. And absolutely Gallic is M. Gerbault's version of "The Temptation of St. Anthony." Note how the lady's fur boa is cunningly made to suggest the devil's tail.

One of the most acute individualities in the world

"THE BUSY WAITER."
By DUDLEY HARDY.

"HELL BEING PAVED WITH GOOD INTENTIONS."
By S. H. SIME.

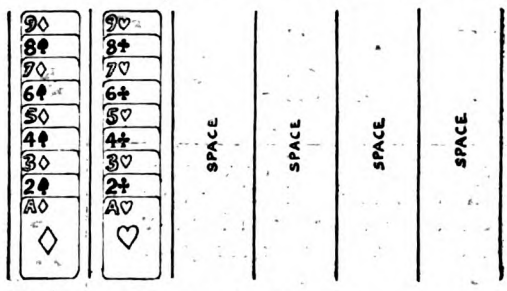
of black-and-white is Mr. S. H. Sime. That he produces so little nowadays is a calamity. He has enormous technical ability coupled with an eerie imagination, and the best of his work, I feel sure, is destined to live. One day I hope he will publish his drawings in volume form, and so consolidate his position as a great master of the grotesque. The drawing, "Hell Being Paved With Good Intentions," given here, is a characteristic example. It is so convincing that you feel that the artist must have been there. Possibly, though, from a moral point of view, the little devils are not terrifying enough.

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

274.—"STRAND" PATIENCE.

THE idea for this came to me recently when considering the game of Patience that I gave in these pages for December, 1910, which has been reprinted in Ernest Bergholt's "Second Book of Patience Games," under the new name of "King Albert.',



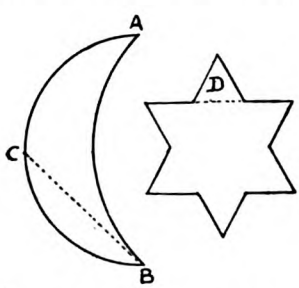
All you need here is the eighteen cards shown in the illustration, to be laid out in the way indicated, in two piles. The point is to exchange the spades with the clubs, so that the diamonds and clubs are still in numerical order in one pile and the hearts and spades in the other. There are four vacant spaces, and any card may be laid on a space, but a card can only be laid on another of the next higher value—an ace on a two, a two on a three, and so on. Patience is required to discover the shortest way of doing this. When there are four vacant spaces, you can pile four cards in seven moves, with only three spaces you can pile them in nine moves, and with two spaces you cannot pile more than two cards. When you have a grasp of these and similar facts you will be able to remove a number of cards bodily and write down 7, 9, or whatever the number of moves may be. The gradual shortening of play is fascinating, and first attempts are surprisingly lengthy. I will state my own lowest record next month.

275.—SAWING THE LOGS.

IF a man charges ten shillings for sawing a cord of wood made up of logs three feet long, each to be cut into three pieces, what should he charge for sawing a cord made up of logs six feet long, to be cut into pieces of the same length? All logs are of the same thickness.

276.—THE CRESCENT AND THE STAR.

BEFORE the Turkish flag disappears from Europe, it occurs to me to devise a little puzzle on the Crescent and the Star. Look at the illustration, and see if you can determine which is the larger, the Crescent or the Star. If both were cut out of a sheet of solid gold, which would be the more valuable? As it is very difficult to guess by the eye, I will state that the outer arc, A C B, is a semicircle; the radius of the inner arc is equal to the straight line B C; the distance in a straight line from A to B is twelve inches; and the point of the star, D, contains three square inches. Now it is quite easy to settle the matter at a glance—when you know how.



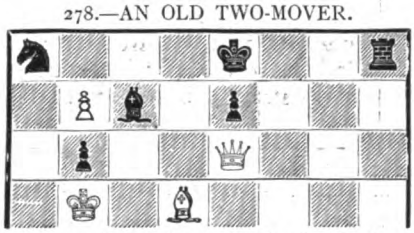
277.—MORE BEHEADING.

A CORRESPONDENT (Rev. C. W. D. C.) sends me the following:—

I tried to *first* at Germans. 'Twas no good.
I failed to *second* those strange hearts of wood.
Third one declared I rattled on too fast.
And when I'd finished, all I heard was *last*.

The first word is three times beheaded to form the other words, like prelate, relate, elate, late.

278.—AN OLD TWO-MOVER.



HERE is another early production by the late Sam Loyd. White to play and checkmate in two moves. The lower part of the board is omitted merely to save space.

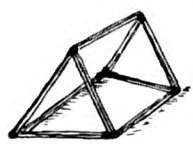
Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

269.—THE HANDCUFFED PRISONERS.

THE following is a solution. Every prisoner will be found to have been handcuffed to every other prisoner once, and only once.

1-2-3	2-6-8	6-1-7	1-4-8	7-2-9	4-3-1
4-5-6	5-9-1	9-4-2	2-5-7	3-6-4	5-8-2
7-8-9	3-7-4	8-3-5	6-9-3	8-1-5	9-7-6

If the reader wants a hard puzzle to keep him engrossed during the winter months, let him try to arrange twenty-one prisoners so that they can all walk out, similarly handcuffed in triplets, on fifteen days without any two men being handcuffed together more than once. In case he should come to the opinion that the task is impossible, I will add that I have just written out a perfect solution. But it is a hard nut!



270.—A NEW MATCH PUZZLE.

ARRANGE the nine matches as shown in the illustration, and the three squares of equal size will be formed.

271.—AN OLD CHESS PUZZLE.

1. Q to R 2	1. K moves.
2. P to R 7	2. K moves.
3. P to R 8 (Kt)	3. K moves.
4. Kt to Kt 6, ch.	4. K moves.
5. P mates.	

272.—ROOT EXTRACTION.

THE only other numbers are 5,832, 17,576, and 19,683, the cube roots of which may be correctly obtained by merely adding the digits, which come to 18, 26, and 27 respectively.

273.—A CHARADE.—TA—LB—OT.

The Best War Story I Have Heard.

In a recent number we invited our readers to send us what they considered the best war story that had come within their knowledge. As might have been expected, we have been inundated with stories—both grave and gay—of which we have already given a first instalment. Here is a second selection.

A GOVERNMENT official was telling an old Scottish farmer what he must do in case of a German raid on the East Coast of Scotland.

"An' hiv I reely tae dae this wi' a' ma beesties gin the Germans come?" asked the old fellow.

"All live stock of every description must be branded and driven inland," the official replied.

"Dearie me!" gasped the farmer, in dismay. "I'm thinkin' I'll hae an awful job wi' ma bees."

H. Tinkler, 40, Northgate Street, Great Yarmouth.

THE following is a true yarn, the scene being the hospital of one of our field ambulances.

Sickly Tommy (to R.A.M.C. orderly): "'Ere, I say, orderly, I've got pines all over me, and orl I'm gettin' is two or three little tablets a day."

Orderly: "That's all right, my man; the medical officer is treating you for gastritis."

Patient: "Gastritis! I thought something was wrong. Why, I ain't never been near no gas!"

Lieut. R. Steele, R.A.M.C.

AN Irish soldier, very drunk, was returning late one night to camp.

"Who goes there?" challenged the sentry.

"Lord Kitchener," replied the tipsy recruit.

The sentry repeated the challenge, and on receiving the same reply made a rush for the offender and knocked him down. When he came to he found a

sergeant bending over him, who asked him why he had not given the sentry a proper answer.

"Holy St. Patrick," replied the soldier, "if he'd do that to Lord Kitchener, what would he do to plain Mike?"

R. F. Murray, 121, Nelson Street, Grimsby.

SCENE: Somewhere in France, some time last winter. On the German trenches a placard was erected, bearing the words, "Gott mit uns."

Our British Tommies were not to be outdone. Up went their rival notice: "We've got mittens too!"

Miss Violet M. Methley, 9, Royal York Crescent, Clifton, Bristol.

A COMPANY of Sherwood Foresters were walking along the bank of a river, when suddenly the commanding officer shouted, "Fall in!"

"No fear!" answered a raw recruit. "I didn't join the Coldstream Guards!"

A. H. Wilson, 16, Cycle Road, Lenton, Nottingham.

A GOOD story from a neutral country is that which comes from America, where it is stated a member of a peace party said if anyone thought he wanted war, before talking about it he should try the following: Dig a trench in a garden or field, half fill it with water,

stand in the trench for three days and nights without having either food or sleep, give a lunatic a rifle or revolver and get him to shoot at you, and then, if still inclined, advocate war.

J. H. Burton, 35, Byron Street, Patricroft, Manchester.

A GERMAN officer stationed in one of the devastated small towns of Belgium had a taste for archæology. He was told of a curious little mediæval chapel which had escaped ruin on a hill above the town, and one afternoon he started off to visit it. The sexton, a bent old man who lived in a cottage close by, was ordered to show him round.

Among the many votive offerings which hung round a fine old painting of the Virgin, the officer noticed a small rat, beautifully carved in silver.

"And what may that animal represent?" he asked, pointing to it.

"That, sir," answered the old man, "is a curious relic of the past century. There was a plague of rats and mice one year in this country. They ate the poor people out of house and home, and no means could be found to destroy them. At last a certain countess, who was very kind to the poor, had this rat carved in silver, and offered it at the Shrine of Our Lady, and ever since that moment every single rat was swept away from the country, as though by enchantment."

The German laughed aloud.

"Good heavens! What a superstitious lot you are! And do you mean to tell me you really believe this rubbish?"

"Oh, no, sir," answered the sexton, very meekly. "That was a long time ago. If we still believed it nowadays, we should long ago have offered Our Lady a German carved in silver."

J. Dorian.

HE was a very raw Irish recruit, and the corporal was instructing him regarding his salutes while on sentry duty.

"If you see a lieutenant—he wears one star—slope arms; if you see a major—a crown—present arms; if the colonel—stars and crown—present, and turn out the guard."

The recruit pondered a while, but presently he was awakened from his reverie by the approach of the general. The recruit surveyed the crossed swords decorating the general, and as he was not included in the corporal's category, the recruit nodded cheerfully.

"Well, my man," said the genial general.

"And who are you supposed to be?" asked the recruit.

"I am supposed to be the general," the other smilingly replied.

"A gineral, is it?" cried the startled recruit. "Then you'll want something big. Hold hard a minute and I'll give yer honour a bayonet exercise."

J. Scott, 35, Carlingford Road, Dublin.

THE following story was told me by a sailor who was rescued from H.M.S. *Triumph*.

There were a few Chinese servants on board who could not swim. When the ship was torpedoed, one of these Chinamen climbed along the pole from which the torpedo-nets are fixed. As the ship rolled over the pole rose high up into the air, taking our Chinese friend with it. When the vessel took its final plunge, the Chinaman was flung far into the air, clear of the sinking ship. When my friend saw him later, he said, "Well, mate, how did you manage to keep yourself up in the water when you left your perch?"

"Oh," said the Chinaman, proudly, "me no swim, me *fly*."

Miss E. C. Copleston, 62, Oakfield Road, Newport, Mon.

PRIVATE JONES was blazing away through his loop-hole, when his section officer rushed up.

"What do you mean, man," he yelled, angrily, "wasting your ammunition like that?"

"I was only giving them fifteen rapid, sir," pleaded the marksman, meekly.

"And do you think you have done any good with your fifteen rapid?" the officer snorted, sarcastically.

"Dunno, sir," said Jones. "But I overheard a German officer telling the stretcher-bearers to bury fourteen of them and take the fifteenth down to the base!"

Charles Lynch, 50, Chatham Street, Liverpool.

THE OGRES OF OJEJAMA.

A Story for Children from the Japanese.

Illustrated by
W. HEATH ROBINSON.

"THEY FOUND A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG MAIDEN WHO WAS

THE celebrated warrior Raiko received orders from the Mikado to punish the ogres who lived at Ojejama, and rescue from their clutches the prisoners whom they had incarcerated in their lair. There was not a family in Kioto at this time which did not mourn the loss of one or several of its members. But no one had as yet dared to attack the ogres' fastness.

Raiko and his followers prepared themselves for this dangerous enterprise. They armed themselves heavily, and taking their finest swords

set out, six in number, towards Ogre Mount, where they expected to find the den of the monsters.

The road was difficult, if not dangerous, and they frequently lost their way. Indeed, the obstacles became so great that they were in despair of getting through, when there appeared before them an old man of gentle and kindly aspect. A long beard, white as snow, swept his garments, and from his eyes shone a celestial brightness.

Raiko made deep obeisance before the venerable one, and asked him if they were on the best road for Ogre Mount.

"What would you there, my son?" asked the old man.

Raiko drew forth from a satchel of gold brocade the Mikado's message, writ plain in large letters: "I BID RAIKO PUNISH THE OGRES."

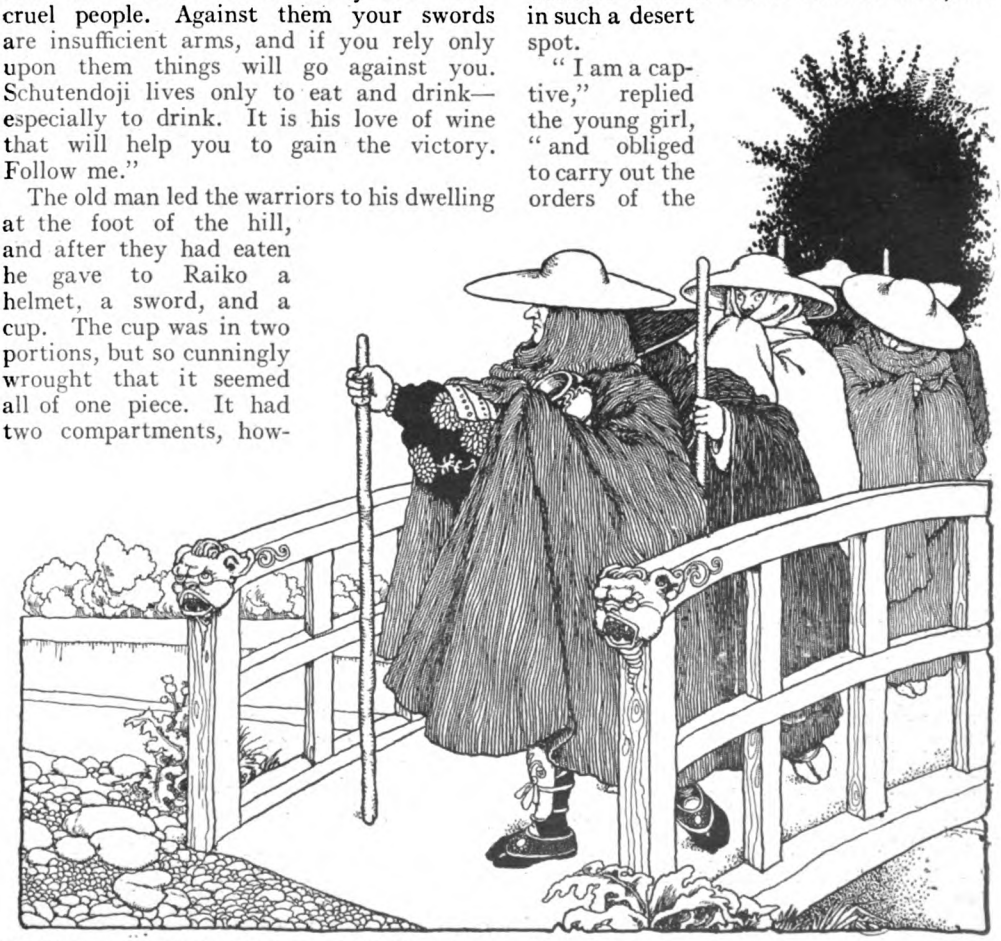
Said the old man, "My son, there is one road which will lead to victory over these cruel people. Against them your swords are insufficient arms, and if you rely only upon them things will go against you. Schutendoji lives only to eat and drink—especially to drink. It is his love of wine that will help you to gain the victory. Follow me."

The old man led the warriors to his dwelling at the foot of the hill, and after they had eaten he gave to Raiko a helmet, a sword, and a cup. The cup was in two portions, but so cunningly wrought that it seemed all of one piece. It had two compartments, however, and was capable of holding different fluids. Then the old man furnished each of the warriors with the garb of a mountain hermit, the ample folds of which hid his weapons. Finally, he bestowed upon Raiko a flagon of his best wine, and a little white powder, which was a powerful sleeping-draught. He wrote down for them a minute description of the road, and how to reach the ogres' gate.

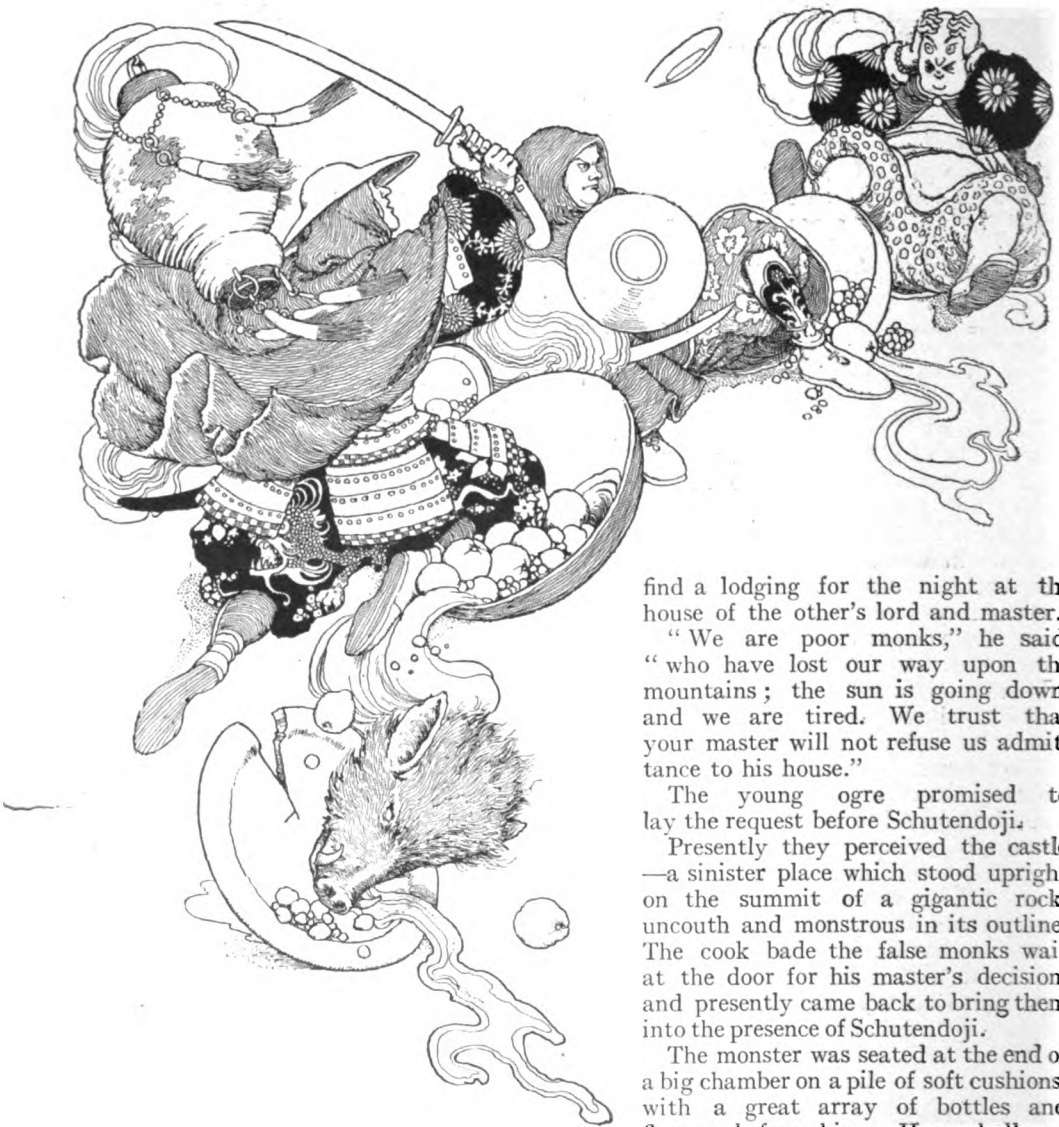
"Forward, my sons, and may Heaven bless you!" cried the old man, when they thanked him and took their leave.

Thus armed, and with courage renewed, the warriors set forth. They passed over hills and valleys, forded rivers, climbed rocks. In the evening, after a laborious march, they drew near a hill which was covered with thick woods. There they found a beautiful young maiden who was washing a blood-stained garment in a stream. The astonished warriors asked her what she did there, alone in such a desert spot.

"I am a captive," replied the young girl, "and obliged to carry out the orders of the



WASHING A BLOOD-STAINED GARMENT IN A STREAM."



ogres, who are my masters. Fly, while there is yet time; fly from this accursed region!"

"Not so," said Raiko. "We are here for the very purpose of discovering the ogres' lair. To-morrow morning you will be free!"

They left the young girl, and continued to climb. A little while after they met a young ogre. He proved to be the cook, and was carrying some pieces of flesh for his master's dinner. Everywhere, scattered on the ground and bleaching in the sun, lay bones.

Raiko gave the ogre greeting, and asked politely if he and his companions could find a lodging for the night at the house of the other's lord and master.

"We are poor monks," he said, "who have lost our way upon the mountains; the sun is going down, and we are tired. We trust that your master will not refuse us admittance to his house."

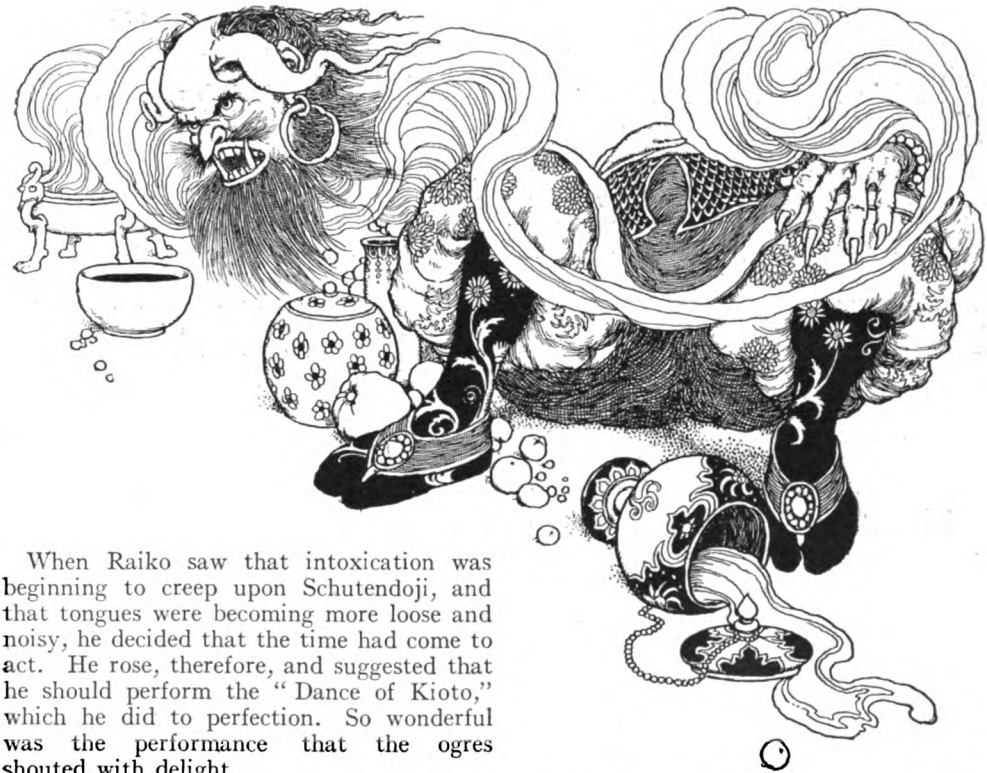
The young ogre promised to lay the request before Schutendoji.

Presently they perceived the castle—a sinister place which stood upright on the summit of a gigantic rock, uncouth and monstrous in its outline. The cook bade the false monks wait at the door for his master's decision, and presently came back to bring them into the presence of Schutendoji.

The monster was seated at the end of a big chamber on a pile of soft cushions, with a great array of bottles and flagons before him. How shall one paint the frightful features of the ogre when he raised his head? His crimson face, his gigantic stature, his two horns of copper, struck terror into the heart of the most valiant.

He received the false monks most amicably, and invited them to share his dinner. The servants began to prepare the repast, which consisted of the heads of animals, and one or two dishes of wild boar and other game.

The wine flowed copiously, an immense tun being placed against the wall, to which all went to replenish their cups. Young girls, enslaved by the monsters, were forced to wait upon them.



When Raiko saw that intoxication was beginning to creep upon Schutendoji, and that tongues were becoming more loose and noisy, he decided that the time had come to act. He rose, therefore, and suggested that he should perform the "Dance of Kioto," which he did to perfection. So wonderful was the performance that the ogres shouted with delight.

Seizing then his great cup, Raiko offered it to Schutendoji, telling him that it contained the most exquisite wine of Tokay. He had previously taken care, at a favourable moment, to fill the two compartments of the cup with wine, and to cast into one of them the sleeping powder. He also took care that the ogres should drink only from the latter portion, while he and his warriors emptied the other.

Schutendoji loudly praised the wine, and drank it to the last drop. Soon sleep overcame him, and he began to snore so violently that one would have thought it thundered. His companions followed his example.

Then Raiko rose and made a sign to his warriors. They drew their swords and fell upon the sleeping ogres, while Raiko threw himself upon Schutendoji. His sword whistled through the air, and the monster's head was severed from his trunk. Instantly the hideous head took flight into the air; its mouth was wide open, its eyes staring, while its horns seemed to grow longer every moment. Seven times the head flew round the chamber, and then made an onslaught upon Raiko. Had the hero been less well armed, there would have been an end of him. The monster's head sought to bite the cowl on the monkish head, but could not compass the helmet. At length, with the violence of an earthquake, it fell to the ground. The victory was won.

"SEVEN TIMES THE HEAD FLEW ROUND THE CHAMBER."

The ogres being dead, the victors set the prisoners free, divided the booty, and, having buried the bodies of the victims, set fire to the castle so that all traces of it vanished for ever.

Followed in delirious joy by the crowd of captives, the heroes set forth upon their return journey, taking with them the head of Schutendoji. Raiko received from the Mikado high honours and great rewards, and the town of Kioto, which he had delivered from its scourge, vowed to hold him eternally in memory.

CURIOSITIES.

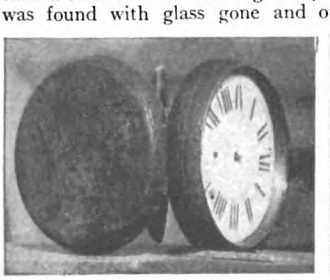
[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

MORE QUEER ENGLISH.

THIS photograph was taken in the Sudder Bazaar of Agra, India, and is a fine sample of Baboo English as written in the East. The enterprising owner of the shop deals in Indian curios of brass and stone, and the painted notice on the wall is without a full-stop or a comma. The notice on the big corner wall, which is not quite distinct in the photograph, reads as follows: "This is marbelinlade (marble, inlaid) shop these thing for sale I have good money thing and cheaper and refreshments I hope you pleas only look in you get cheaper here and nice then nother shop."—Lance-Corporal R. Cameron, Staff Band, 3rd Seaforth Highlanders.

THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF A WATCH.

I AM sending you two photographs of a watch, the history of which may be of interest to STRAND readers. This watch was lost and ploughed under in June, 1912. The land was drilled, harrowed, rolled, crop stripped, and stubble fire put through, while in the winter of 1913 the land was cultivated, drilled, harrowed, crop stripped, and eighteen horses were turned on it to feed. On August 14th, 1914, the watch was found with glass gone and one hand missing, while the other hand came off when touched, but when the watch was wound up it started going straight away. The works were as bright as when bought. You will notice from the photograph that the outside case, instead of being smooth gun-metal, is rough with rust; being a mailman's watch it was guaranteed to be impervious to atmospheric conditions, and I think it has justly proved to be. The watch was purchased from Messrs. Angus and Coote, jewellers, of Sydney, New South Wales, who can testify to its being in perfect working order when I forwarded it to them, thinking it worthy of exhibition. — Mrs. C. E. Groom, Highfield, Wagin, Western Australia.



THE DEVIL'S BIBLE.

ONE of the treasures of the Royal Library at Stockholm is an enormous manuscript volume called the "Devil's Bible." According to a legend, it was written

by a monk in a single night by the aid of the Evil One, who, it will be observed, is depicted by the artist monk in bathing drawers! The manuscript is beautifully illuminated, and is probably the work of some cute churchman of the Middle Ages, who sought to gain eminence by pretending to have dealings with Satan. The book was brought from Prague during the Thirty Years' War.—Mr. W. H. Weedon, 44, Kirke Veien, Christiania, Norway.

Our Twenty-Fifth Birthday.

"THE STRAND MAGAZINE" REACHES
A QUARTER OF A CENTURY.

With the present number "The Strand Magazine" completes the 25th year of its existence. Such an event—which has never been approached among publications of its kind—deserves some commemoration We have considered that the best kind of commemoration, and that which our readers would most appreciate, would be to turn out

THE MOST INTERESTING NUMBER

of the whole three hundred. We think we have succeeded.

"AND THE VERY BIGGEST OF THE LOT, WHAT WAS ABOUT FOUR FATHOMS LONG TO SHOW ME HIS

(*See page* 612.)

MERCANTILE LIBRARY.
NEW YORK.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

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The Competition in the "Castlebar."

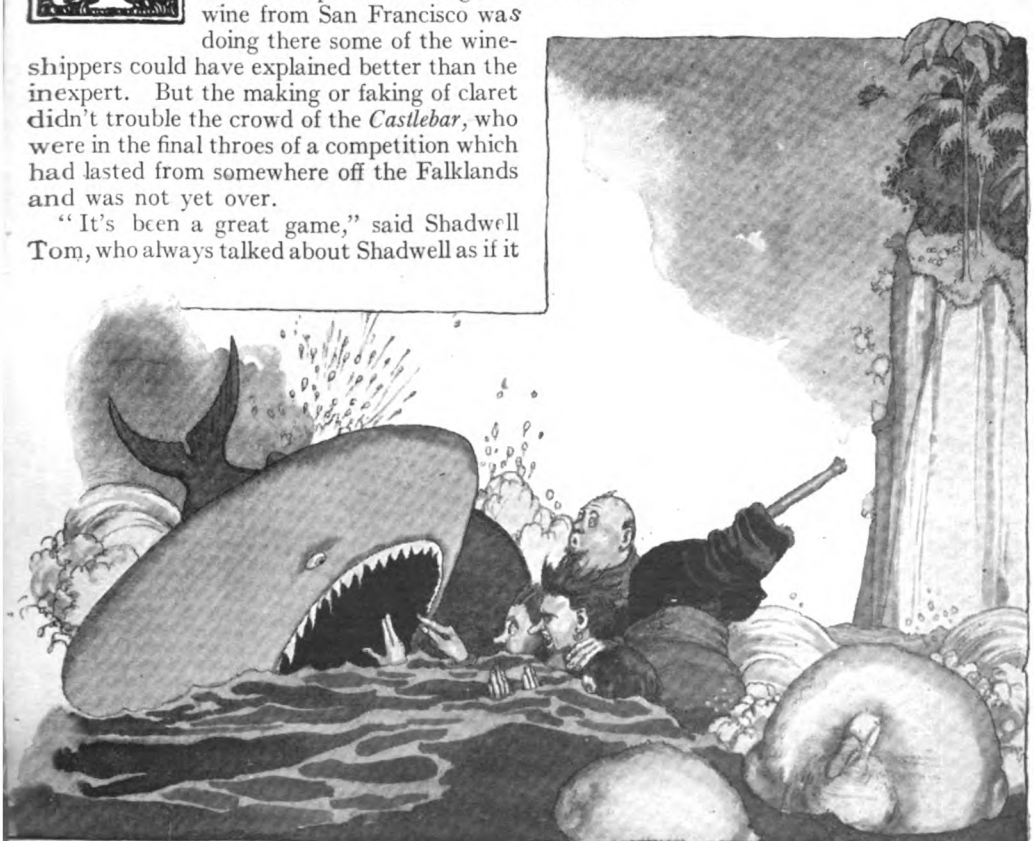
By MORLEY ROBERTS

Illustrated by W. Heath Robinson

THE *Castlebar*, a five thousand ton tramp belonging to Sunderland, lay alongside the wharf in "Bordeaux River." What a steamship with a cargo of wine from San Francisco was doing there some of the wine-shippers could have explained better than the inexpert. But the making or faking of claret didn't trouble the crowd of the *Castlebar*, who were in the final throes of a competition which had lasted from somewhere off the Falklands and was not yet over.

"It's been a great game," said Shadwell Tom, who always talked about Shadwell as if it were a health resort. "'Twas a great scheme of mine to set us all lying and guffing the way I done."

And the crowd owned that it was a great scheme.



OR MORE, COMES RIGHT UP TO ME AND OPENS HIS MOUTH AS IF HE WAS GOING FINE SET OF TEETH."

Copyright, 1915, by Morley Roberts.

"The prize ain't no more than a pound of terbacker," said Shadwell, "but the pride of winning is the same as if it was a ton. And now 'tis Cockney Bill's turn to tell agen Ned Tombs, and I looks to see Ned laid out."

Nevertheless, Tombs had done his best and everyone reckoned it was good and strong. He had, so he said, worked in Central India in the hot season on an allowance of half a pint of water a day, and besides this remarkable feat of endurance he had thrown in a Rajah's daughter, the Governor-General, an elephant, a tiger, and a crocodile. The port watch swore Bill couldn't beat that yarn if he guffed a year. And while they talked and the starboard watch, with oaths, supported Cockney Bill's claim to be the biggest liar aboard, that simple-hearted sailorman sat back with a modest smile upon his face.

"Come, ain't it time we started afore we has a rough house?" urged Shadwell Tom, when the two watches began to hurl challenges at each other. "Black eyes and blood won't settle which is the best yarn. A jolt on the jaw may be a good hargument in a public-house, but it ain't worth a hill of beans when it comes to settling the real rights of a thing. To be peaceable is the thing unless you think you can't get your own way by being peaceable. I says Bill's the biggest liar unhung. Come on, Bill, buck up, don't be bashful."

And when Cockney Bill had cut a fistful of tobacco and rubbed it in his hands he proclaimed his readiness to start.

"What I'm going to begin with looks rather measly," said Bill, "for it's rice, no more than that, mates—rice what you biles and sometimes eats. Take that in, settle on your hunkers, fill your pipes, take a puff, and consider how I can get 'igh excitement out of rice what'll beat them as died daily in Central Hindia and rose up out of their dry graves to marry a Rajah's daughter set on a helephant, what lost his tail to a tiger, what was ate by a crocodile. But, boys, you'll soon find out that though rice is cold to begin with, I'll soon rise it up to the biling p'int, or I'm a dago!

"The old *Coloma* was lying in the Willammette, what's the river of Portland, Oregon, as you mostly knows. There was a very disgruntling bucko mate in her, His name was Bob Grant, and he ought to have been hung. In his career there was a mutiny and he was put over the side with a boy, and that boy, what I knowed, allowed he'd rather go to sea with a large tiger than with that same Bob Grant. But the skipper was a good man, and the second mate, though tough and cross-eyed, would hear reason if you stood far enough away from him at the time. But I'd sooner reason with Ned Tombs's crocodile than with that Bob Grant, and I never done so, not me, though I've picked up silly jossers what had. and wiped the blood off of their faces and helped them to their bunks."

"Seemingly, this last ship of yours was a real wonder, Bill," said the starboard watch to a man.

"Ah, you bet it was," sighed Cockney Bill. "The dreadful thickness with which things developed in her was horrid. The ships I've sailed in since has been peaceful homes of heavingly rest, convallycent homes, so to speak, when compared with her, homes with a kind nuss handy what tucks you up when she puts you to bed, saying, 'Daddy, behave yourself and don't swear none!' But now I'll let you have the thing in the neck. Mates, I hates rice, for it chased me nigh to my death; and when I tells you why and how I hate it and what a thing it can be when it's properly roused you won't wonder. Aboard the old *Coloma* I was haunted and hunted by it. I've been aboard a ship with ghosts, but ghosts ain't in it with rice. A hundred ghosts never had the effeck on me what ten pounds of rice had, and so I tell you, to say nothing of the tigers and the sea-birds, and the sharks, and the pore old misfortunate *Coloma* in which it all happened.

"Well, we was lying in the Willammette off of Portland, Oregon, an unholy town, too, but pretty when you goes aloft and looks at the scenery, for it has a mountain at the back, with snow atop like a fine wedding-cake. The *Coloma* was then taking in lumber for Hong-Kong, and the mate, Bob Grant, was very hard on us. And maybe my hope of getting rid of him made me listen to the skipper when he come and, so to speak, sang his song to me. But if I'd savvied what was going to happen, I wouldn't have listened to the skipper's wily palaver, not for nuts. For the 'old man' come up to me, and says:—

"'Look 'ere, Mason, you've got to cook!'

"And that was because our rum old food-spoiler went up town on the randan and had a jamboree on his lonesome and painted a dark part of Portland bright scarlet and got jumped on by a tough and had his ribs bust in, and was took up to the horspital, not feeling the man he thought he was when the drink was in him. And the skipper lets on to me that he'd looked over the others and sounded 'em and settled on me. For he says:—

"'You seem clean and well-behaved, so

go into the galley and cook. Have no more jaw about it,' says he, 'for somebody must cook,' says he, 'so heave ahead and do your best.'

"Oh, he was bally perliteful compared with Mr. Grant! And though low in my mind I done my best at the job. So far as common pertaters and carrots and beef and pork went I was good and able, though at fust they was apt to be raw in the middle till I larnt to chew samples for a test. But when it come to fine work, puddin's and the like, I was clean out of it, and the pig mostly got my work. And at last beef and pork and pertaters seemed to pall on the 'old man,' and one day he comes to the galley and says to me:—

"'Can't you be more various, my man?' says he. 'There's a dead sameness and wearifulness about pork and beans and beef and pertaters every day.'

"'Why, no, sir,' says I, 'I don't see how I can, not having been brought up to it. Even the old cook, sir,' says I, 'warn't various neither, leastways not so far as us men was concerned, only sometimes his cooking was worse than others.'

"Oh, I let the skipper have it. But he says:—

"'Well, I've just ordered in some rice,' says he, 'and we'll have it to-night.'

"And I kind of blinks, and ups and says:—

"'Yes, sir; but rice I knows nothing about. How d'ye cook it?'

"And he says, quite contempshus:—

"'Why, you cooks it with water, you biles it, that's all there is to it,' says he.

"But he was a ignorant man what knowed nothing about the nature of rice. In the arternoon a boy come down from the town bringing a bag of rice, about ten pounds, I reckons. I heard arter it was the very best, but it looked quite harmless. So I says to myself, quite innercent:—

"'Now, about this garbage: there's three of 'em aft, or four with the stooard, and there's me here, and maybe I might have a little over for the coves for'ard to take a snack out of it.'

"So I handles the biggest saucepan what I had and empts the rice into it and slaps water on it and claps the mystery box on the galley fire. And I says, smiling, pore lamb that I was:—

"'Why, this is as easy as falling off of a log. You just lets it bile and then it'll be done.'

"Now, there was a cove in the crowd called Crittenden, what I liked well. We was kind of mates. He comes along into the galley and looks round and says:—

"'What are you cooking now, Bill? Beef or pork, I reckon, or if it ain't beef or pork, I suppose it's pork or beef.'

"He was gettin' at me, in course. But being a cook I was cross-tempered. So I says:—

"'You're off it, you smart-aleck; I'm a-cooking rice.'

"'Rice?' says he. 'Where is it—in that there pot?'

"He goes to the saucepan and he lifts up the lid and looks in and goes away laughing. And I puts my head out of the galley and shouts out:—

"'Well, Crit, you swine, what the blazes are you laughing at?'

"But he looks back at me agin and puts his finger alongside of his nose. For two pins I'd have hove a dipper of hot water over him. But I cooled off and started to peel pertaters. And I hears the water biling, and I peels pertaters very content, letting it bile. But soon arter I hears something more, and I turns round and sees the lid arising off of the saucepan, and I wonders, and then I sees it rising higher with white under it, for the rice was a-swelling. 'Twas then I knowed what that silly swab Crittenden guffawed at. And I fetches out another saucepan and ladles out half of what was in the one saucepan into the other and puts more water atop and sets the two of 'em on the stove. And down I sets to peeling pertaters as afore. But this time I keeps my weather eye open very suspicious. And mighty soon I sees the two lids arising up. So I skips and gets two more saucepans and ladles out half of the rice into the two new saucepans, and fills 'em up with water and puts the four lids atop. But afore I'd peeled three more pertaters, to say nothing of cutting my thumb, the four lids was rising up and the half-cooked rice a-biling out on the stove. So I skips ag'in to get four more pots, and I ladles half of the stuff out of them four into the new four as fast as I can, puts more water atop, and claps the eight lids on, and sets down once more to peeling. But there, I was that narvous and excited, you wouldn't believe, and I hadn't peeled more than a pertater and a half and cut my other thumb afore them eight lids was arising up and rice falling out on the hot stove. Now there was no more saucepans, but there was open pots and pans of sorts, and I gets all I could, and ladles and ladles with tears in my heyes at the excitingness and the wildness of the nature of rice. And just when I was sweating and skipping like a cooper round a cask, the skipper comes along, no doubt

"ALL THE TIME THE RICE WAS BILING OUT."

having heard me saying things arter the manner of a cook. And he says:—

"'Why, Mason, what the blazes are you doing of?'

"'I'm cooking rice, sir,' says I, very active on my legs, for I was skipping like a billy-goat.

"'Rice?' says he. 'How much have you cooked?'

"'Cooked, sir?' says I, still on the high jump. 'I don't think it's cooked yet, sir,' says I. 'I put in what was brought up in a bag.'

"And he roars:—

"'You consarned fool! Don't you know the nature of rice?'

"And at that I gets savage in my mind and stops skipping and says:—

"'Seemingly,' says I.

"But all the time the rice was biling out, and the skipper, what didn't like waste, came into the caboose alongside of me and takes a ladle. And the mate, hearing the uproar we was making, and likewise being agin waste, lends a hand, and the second mate also. And afore I knowed where I was I was hove out on deck by the mate for being in the way and not skipping quick, and I was that weary I was thankful to be out of it. And presently they more or less got ahead of the rice, and said a deal to me. And we had rice for a week arter that till we hated it. We had rice hot, and rice cold, and rice with treacle, and rice with sugar, and rice with curry powder, and rice cold with beef, and with pork, and cold rice with sugar and treacle. And the men ups and comes to me and says, fair desperate:—

"'Sarve us any more rice, Bill, and, by crumbs, we'll scupper you!'

"Well, that's how I larn't the nature of rice, and the mystery of biling it. The time I struck the deck when our hard and hefty mate hove me out of the galley, I struck work. But the two mates, one on each side of me, persuaded me to keep on cooking till the skipper raised another cook. And I agrees, very

unwilling, but gives the 'old man' a week to find another cook, or I'd jump overboard or desart. And presently, arter raking Portland with a small comb for a cook, he raised a queer, odd one, a fierce blighter with a wooden leg what looked like a pirate but had been a man-o'-war's man. He had white bristles on his head what stood up like the crest of a cockatoo and some rheumatics in his hands, and he was mad, or I'm much mistook. And that night, having got rid of the business of cooking, I had my fust real good doss in freedom of mind. But I believes it was something to do with that old cook what set everything wrong arter this, for things went strange and wild, and we had the queerest voyage that ever mortal seaman had. Soon arter this we leaves Portland, where we'd loaded lumber for Hong Kong, and took Chinkies what was going home to China. And that cook treated us like the dirt beneath his feet, and he was only halfway civil to the orfficers, and he put the fear of God into the heart of the second mate by taking a carving-knife to him when he put his head into the galley. He says to him :—

"'If you comes into my galley I'll have your heart and liver.'

"And we had a quick passage to Hong-Kong, where we discharges our lumber and the Chinkies. And things aboard the ship was very queer because the old cook got hold of the skipper when it comes out they was townies. And the cook would go aft and yarn with the skipper, a thing I'd never seen done. And if the mate so much as said a word to him he'd out with a carving-knife in half a jiffy, looking as black as the Earl of Hell's riding-boots. But soon the 'old man' picked up a cargo of rice for London Town in Hong-Kong, and they packed us with it chock-a-block. And I hated to see it come aboard, for I'd got a scunner at it in my mind, and I kept thinking that if ten pounds of rice swelled so mountanious what would a thousand tons do? And we points the old *Coloma's* nose for home. Very gallant we sails across the China Seas, for, it being the sou'west monsoon at that time, we takes the eastern rowt what's the other side of the Philippines, and we skips through Gillolo Passage, and arter that by Pitt's Passage and Ombay, as I'd frequent done afore. And all the time rice was in my mind. And one night, seemingly about two bells in the middle watch, though it was my watch below, I comes out on deck feeling some sick, for I'd smelt something, being always keen in my nose and able to smell a common smell a mile off. So I stands and sniffs, and sniffs, and sniffs, and I says to myself :—

"'What ho!'

"And then, looking aft, I sees our precious mate leaning over the rail at the break of the poop in the light of the moon. And much to the surprise of myself I goes aft and says to him, quite calm and free :—

"'I say, can you smell anything?'

"I didn't say 'sir' to him neither, which was most surprising, but more surprising still, he never raised no objection. But he says to me :—

"'Smell anything? Why, what d'ye mean?'

"And he was all changed, p'r'aps through his hatred of the cook. But I says :—

"'I don't know what you smells, but I smells fire.'

"Yes, that was the true catsastrophe. And afore you could say knife the skipper and the second mate was on deck and all hands out. And the 'old man' says :—

"'Oh, on fire is she? Well, it don't surprise me none. Nothing surprises me arter the yarns I've had with my old towny, the cook!'

"Queer, I thought it; oh, I did think it queer! I reckoned he'd took to drink. But he says :—

"'We must pump water into her, Mr. Grant.'

"So we bores holes in her hatches and pumps in water like as if we was going to bale out the whole bally Hindian Ocean. And then the rice began to cook, me knowing the smell of it. And it seemed to me arter what had happened at Portland I was a kind of a rice Jonah what had a hevil hinfluence on the old hooker. And the 'old man' stared queer at me and shakes his fist and says :—

"'Cockney Bill, you blighter, for two pins I'd have you put overboard, you Jonah, you!'

"He was quite different and strange to a degree, and all of us said it was through the cook, what was a pirate and a towny of the skipper's. But presently the old ship burnt very fierce inside, and we begins to hear her cracking and creaking like as if she was working in a heavy sea. That day I remember I went aft to take my trick at the wheel, and it was Crittenden I relieved, and he says to me :—

"'What-ho, sonny, she's creaking some and making very funny noises even here,' says he.

"And I says :—

"'You wait till you gets for'ard and you'll hear the old gal talk a bit!'

"And he puts his finger alongside of his nose, as was his scornful habit, and says :—

"'Bill, what about that there rice you cooked over to Portland?'

"And then I tumbles to what was going on inside of the old hooker. I'd suspicioned it afore, but it never come home to me till now. And arter that the 'old man' come up alongside of me and rubbed his chin and looked in the binnacle, and stands a-shifting his feet like a cat on hot bricks. And I says:—

"'Begging your pardon, sir, might I speak to you?'

"And he says:—

"'Why, what is it, my man?'

"'Tis the nature of rice, sir,' says I.

"'The nature of what?' says the skipper.

"And I shakes my cabeza very slow, and says:—

"'Well, sir; d'ye remember the time we was lying in the Willammette off of Portland, and you fetched me rice to cook, and I made a fatal error?'

"And then he laughed, and pretty nigh rolled on the deck like as if he was full. He was a very strange skipper since he'd had that cook aboard.

"'Well, what are you guffing about that there rice?" says he, presently, when he'd cotched his breath.

"And I said:—

"'Well, sir, seemingly pretty much the same thing's going on here as went on in the galleypots when we was lying off of Portland.'

"'Pretty much the same thing? Hexplain!' says the old man, very stiff and 'aughty all of a sudden.

"'Why, sir,' says I, 'there's rice and there's heat and there's water, and the rice is a-swelling up inside of this here ship, and mighty soon we'll be biling the same as my pots done when we was lying in the Willammette off of Portland.'

"And there he stood, quite kerflummuxed, like a stuck pig considering his latter end. And it seemed to me he'd been drinking, for he done a short step-dance—a most odd thing for any skipper to do. But he says:—

"'Holy Moses! I believe the blighter's right.'

"And wiv that he steps over to the mate what was on the lee side—him that hated the cook and what the cook hated. Did I tell you, or didn't I, that him and the cook had a rough house as we was coming through Gillolo Passage, and the mate kicked the cook's wooden leg from under him? And he went down very hard, did that cook, on his latter end, and the way he looked at Bob Grant would have singed the beard off of a brass statue. And the cap'n says to him:—

"'Mr. Grant, this here chap, Cockney Bill, has a notion.'

"And to hear the skipper call me Cockney Bill made my hair stand on end. But Bob Grant looks at me and takes me in like as if I was the scum off of a pot. And the skipper lets on what my notion was, and done a little step-dance. And he says to me:—

"'Here, Cockney Bill, I'll take the wheel. Go down below and fetch me up a drink.'

"And I done so, relieved in my mind to think it was only drink. And the skipper tells the mate what my notion was when I come back.

"'Here we are, filled up wiv rice,' says the skipper, 'and there's heat and there's water, and the rice is a-biling in hot water, and presently it'll swell up. Soon it'll be biling like as it did that time this here cove cooked rice in this here same ship when we was lying in the Willammette off of Portland.'

"And the mate says:—

"'Why, sir, it's damned nonsense, and you're as mad as a hatter.'

"That's what the josser said, and he never begged the skipper's pardon for saying it was damned nonsense neither, which was very queer. By now she was a queer ship. And every moment I was looking to see the cook come on deck and take a hand. And I says:—

"'Sir, if I might speak, how can it be nonsense, with all this creaking and cracking and jawing of this 'pore old ship?'

"And the mate snorted like a mule, and says:—

"'Tis the nature of fire.'

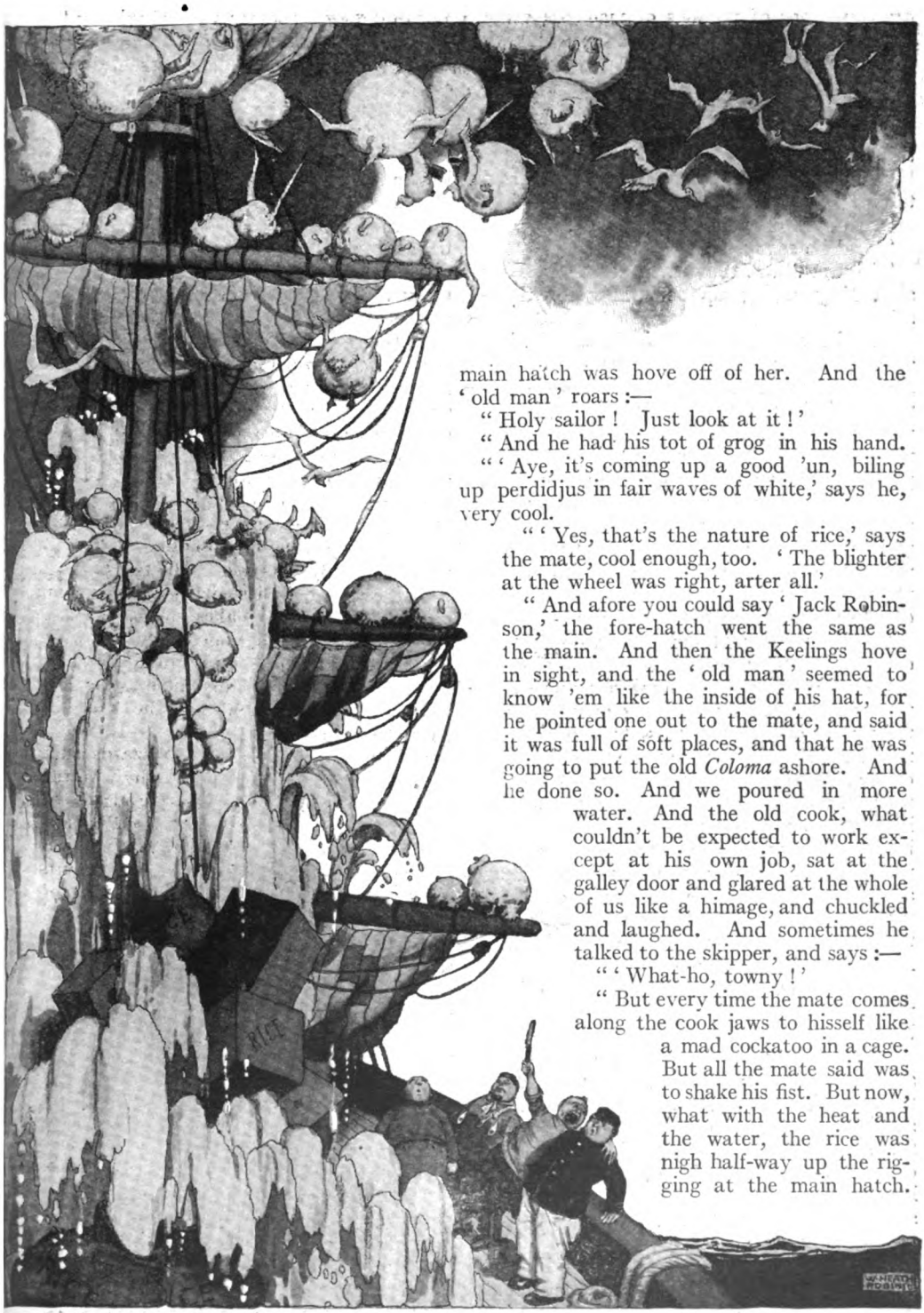
"And he was very contempshus. And I was quiet but contempshus in my mind. And I says:—

"'Begging your pardon, sir, the hatch'll be hove off of her presently and the rice'll be biling out. I'd like to see this here ship making tolerable free with some land if there's any under our lee. What about them Keelings?' says I, half-trembling at being so free. But I'd helped myself to drink when I got the chance, as you may guess.

"And Bob Grant, he stood and sniffed and looked at me. But he never knocked me down like, as I was expecting, which was queer. And then he stood away a bit and thought things over. And he says at last:—

"'Well, maybe the rice'll bust her up.'

"And then we hears a awful creaking and cracking. The skipper and the mate runs for'ard to the break of the poop, just as the



main hatch was hove off of her. And the 'old man' roars :—

"Holy sailor! Just look at it!'

"And he had his tot of grog in his hand.

"'Aye, it's coming up a good 'un, biling up perdidjus in fair waves of white,' says he, very cool.

"'Yes, that's the nature of rice,' says the mate, cool enough, too. 'The blighter at the wheel was right, arter all.'

"And afore you could say 'Jack Robinson,' the fore-hatch went the same as the main. And then the Keelings hove in sight, and the 'old man' seemed to know 'em like the inside of his hat, for he pointed one out to the mate, and said it was full of soft places, and that he was going to put the old *Coloma* ashore. And he done so. And we poured in more water. And the old cook, what couldn't be expected to work except at his own job, sat at the galley door and glared at the whole of us like a himage, and chuckled and laughed. And sometimes he talked to the skipper, and says :—

"'What-ho, towny!'

"But every time the mate comes along the cook jaws to hisself like a mad cockatoo in a cage. But all the mate said was to shake his fist. But now, what with the heat and the water, the rice was nigh half-way up the rigging at the main hatch.

"BUT NOW, WHAT WITH THE HEAT AND THE WATER, THE RICE WAS NIGH HALF-WAY UP THE RIGGING."

And hundreds of millions of sea-birds come along to look up things, and they took to the rice amazing, and gobbled greedy. And Crittenden comes up to me when we was taking a spell off and says :—

"'Bill, you're a rice hexpert,' says he; 'is this rice prop'ly cooked?'

"And I puts down my weary hand and takes up a bit, and rubs it, and says :—

"'No, it's only half-cooked, Crit.'

"And he says :—

"'What about these here sea-birds, Bill; ain't they laying up something for theirselves?'

"And for a moment I didn't tumble, but all of a sudden I did. These pore sea-birds, like me, knowed nothing about the nature of rice, and they was gobbling half-biled stuff what hadn't done swelling. And they filled theirselves up to the beaks with it. And presently they warn't so greedy. And we seed 'em sitting up aloft, all along the yards, very fat and plump they looked, more like pouter pigeons than sea-gulls. And there was hundreds of thousands of 'em sitting on the water and hundreds of thousands more on the beach. And old Crit says :—

"'Bill, when will the rice begin to bile out of them pore birds?'

"And them gulls was mighty uneasy in their minds by now, uttering squeaks as if they was asking for help. Some of 'em rolled off of their feet, and the rice biled out of 'em. And the chief animals what was on that island was tigers—a thing I never knowed afore, and I reckoned they ate sea-birds if they could catch 'em. So now there was tigers all over the beach catching a sea-bird every time they opened their mouths, for, in course, the birds warn't able to fly, having so much pain in their insides. And I says to myself :—

"'Why, them pore wretched tigers ashore what's eating sea-birds filled up with half-biled rice is eating half-biled rice theirselves.'

"And arter that Crittenden, having to go aft, borrowed a glass from the stooard to take a look at the tigers. And him and me saw 'em setting in rows quite full and wishful for no more sea-birds. And one of 'em opened his mouth and gave a kind of a dumb howl and he rolls over, and another done the same, and then another. And I says to the second mate what was coming by :—

"'If you please, sir, would you like to look at them tigers what has eaten them sea-birds what has eaten that rice, because I thinks the rice is beginning to bile over in 'em the same as it done in the sea-birds?'

"And now I comes to the sharks and also to the cook what was sharpening a carving-knife in the galley. The sea-birds what couldn't get ashore to be eaten by the tigers was setting on the water exciting of the sharks. It ain't often sharks catches sea-birds, for they mostly gets off the water, like as if it was hot, when a shark sails by. But now the pore beggars, being dreadful interested in their insides, hadn't no time to be looking out and was gobbled up one arter another. The sharks found them birds so tasty they went at 'em no allowance. And in the course of half an hour the water was fair biling with sharks. But soon them sharks began a-sailing round as if they was satisfied and asking for no more. And Crit and me keeps our weather-eyes open, and soon we seed a young shark about nine feet long doing somersaults in the water wiv his mouth wide open and looking mighty uneasy, and very thick about the middle he was. Then the water was fair biling wiv sharks, all wiv their mouths wide open, like as if you'd put a brick between their back teeth. And the rice and the sea-birds began to bile out of 'em very terrible and tremenjus, as the pore old *Coloma* was doing. And we lets on she was doomed. But all the time the skipper sat on the rail and smoked his pipe wiv his glass in his hand, as comfor'ble as if he was at home. And then the old cook stumps out on deck with his eyes busting out of his head and the two carving-knives in his hand. And at the sight of him we all laid off work, that dumb struck we was wiv horror. He stalks along the deck, and shouts :—

"'Where's that Bob Grant till I cuts the heart out of him?'

"And Mr. Grant was on the poop, and the skipper says, very affable, to the cook :—

"'Come, towny, what's the meaning of this here conduct, walking about wiv two carving-knives, desiring the heart of my mate?'

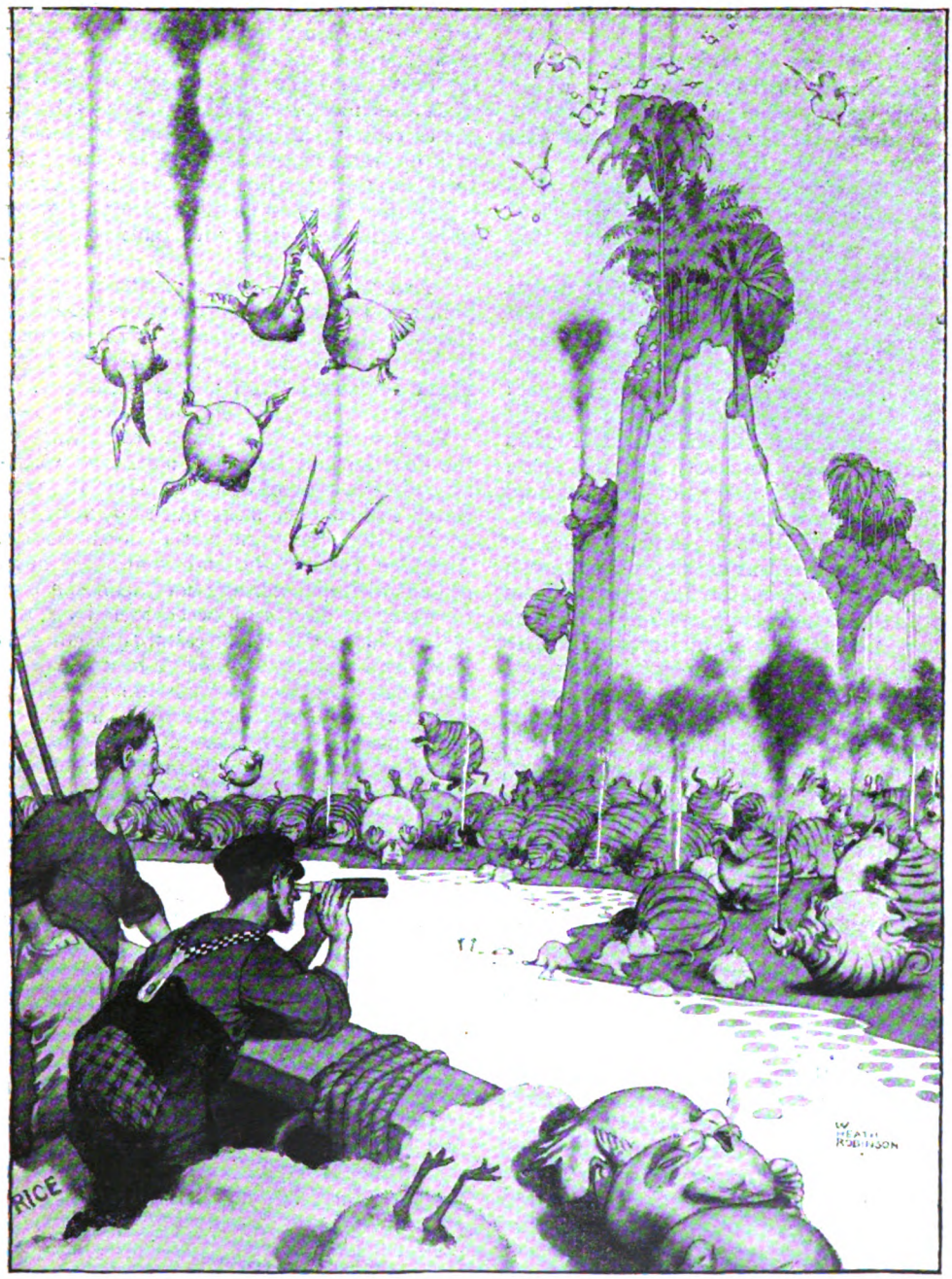
"And the old cook says :—

"'Stand aside, towny; it ain't nothing to do wiv you, and I wants none of your inside works; but give me Bob Grant and I'll cook peaceable.'

"And the mate, hearin' his name, hops down off of the poop and slides along the main deck, and his nibs was real bucko and the dead spit of a murderer. But the skipper stops him, and says :—

"'Mr. Grant, lemme intervoo the cook myself.'

"And the cook says :—



"AND HIM AND ME SAW 'EM SETTING IN ROWS QUITE FULL AND WISHFUL FOR NO MORE."

"'Stand aside, towny, and let him come this way, for I wants his heart and liver. Did he or did he not kick my wooden leg from under me, and let me down, kerslosh, upon the deck coming through Gillolo Passage?'

"'I done so,' said the mate, 'and you miserable old pirate, you, if I'd done my dooty by you I'd have had one of your carving-knives and cut your other leg off.'

"And then the cook stands firm, and says:—

"'All this work is the nature of rice, and I knowed it when I set the ship a-fire,' says 'e; 'for that's what I done, and I owns to

it; so let me have Bob Grant's heart and liver.'

"Well, we was all took aback. But all the skipper says to the cook was:—

"'Oh, towny, what a foolish thing for you to do to set the ship afire what was under us all in the Hindian Ocean!'

"But the mate says:—

"'You blighted, half-legged slummock!' says the mate, 'I'll larn you to set a ship afire!'

"And he rushes at the cook, what makes for him wiv two carving-knives. But rice had its way, as it always will. For the cook makes a low jab at the mate, slips wiv his wooden leg in the soft rice, and down he goes on the deck, and one carving-knife falls out of his fist and sticks in the mate's trousers and cuts his leg. And with that the mate jumps in and catches hold of the cook and heaves him overboard all among the sharks. It was a dreadful deed. And we runs to the side, saying it was a thing no sailorman ought to have done, for he ought to have drawed the carving-knife out of his trousers and rammed it through his throat. But to heave a man to sharks is an awful deed. And we all went to the rail, as I says, and the cook having lost his other leg to a shark, was much troubled in his mind as he swam about wiv the carving-knife he still had hold of. But my mate, Crittenden, says to Mr. Grant:—

"'What, you shark-feeding perisher! Would you heave a man to the sharks?'

"And he ups wiv him and heaves him overboard, and he fell on a large shark and howled tremenjus. And Crittenden says to me:—

"'Let's go overboard and save the cook, for, between you and me, there ain't a shark that'd so much as look at a pork chop, no, not if you handed it to him on a plate!'

"And wiv that, Crittenden goes overboard as bold as brass. And it seemed to me I had to do something, so I takes the second mate by the back of his neck and the scruff of his breeches and heaves him over the rail into the middle of 'em. And I goes arter him. And then, mates, what happened none of you can guess, not if you was to stay at it for a month of Sundays. And while you thinks it over I'll fill my pipe again."

And as he did so the crowd of the *Castlebar* guessed their hardest.

"Oh, come, Bill," said Shadwell Tom, presently, "don't keep these here pore blighters on tenter-'ooks."

And Bill, having filled his pipe, took a puff or two, and said:—

"Well, what happened was this: them pore sharks came up all round us looking miserable and uneasy, and seemingly asking for help. And the very biggest of the lot, what was about four fathoms long or more, comes right up to me and opens his mouth as if he was going to show me his fine set of teeth clogged up with rice. And he says:—

"'Rouse up, you blighter; are you going to lie in this here bunk till I pulls you out of it?'

"And with that, mates, I struck out at him, and I took the skin off my knuckles on the side of the bunk what I was a-sleeping in in the good old *Coloma* what was lying in the Willammette off of Portland."

For a moment there was a dead silence in the fo'c'sle, and then the starboard watch burst into a roar of laughter. But the port watch looked very sick, and said, with one accord, that the yarn was a dead suck-in. And Ned Tombs, who had lived six months in Central India, working hard on half a pint of water a day, and had scooted with a Rajah's daughter on an elephant that was killed by a tiger that was eaten by a crocodile, said that his objection was that Bill's yarn wasn't true. And, backed up by his mates, he demanded that he should be awarded the pound of tobacco. In order to forestall any attempt to rob him of his due, he tried to take it from Shadwell, as a result of which he was jolted on the jaw and knocked as flat as a jib-down-haul. When the ensuing rough house ended and they had totted up the wounded, Bill, who was one of the least hurt, offered generously to go halves with Ned Tombs.

"That is, I will if you owns up that you're as big a liar as me, Ned."

"What?" asked Ned, indignantly. "I'm to own up I'm a liar for a measly half-pound of terbacker, am I?"

But Shadwell, as he mopped his lumpy face, intervened with gentle counsels.

"No, Ned, old son; not for the sake of the terbacker, but for the sake of peace—just for the sake of peace and harmony."

As he spoke he was investigating carefully the condition of his starboard eye by means of a small looking-glass. He repeated:—

"Yes, Ned; just for peace and harmony."

And Ned relented.

"Well, on that account I'll own that my yarn warn't *all* true. Is it halves, Bill?"

"Halves wiv you, old son," said Bill, generously. "And pass that glass along, Shadwell, or your looks will break it."

STRANGER THAN FICTION.

THE STATUE OF DANTE IN THE PINCIO AT ROME, REFERRED TO IN THIS ARTICLE. [*Photo.*] [*L. Felici.*

By

A. CONAN DOYLE.

Illustrated by Thomas Somerfield.

WHEN one casts one's thoughts back upon one's own life in search of things which seem particularly strange, it is not in the material events that one most clearly perceives them. I have had the good fortune to have had a fairly adventurous life and to have visited strange parts of the world under interesting conditions. I have seen something of two wars. I have practised the most dramatic profession in the world. I have travelled from North Greenland and Spitzbergen to West Africa, and my thoughts can conjure up many a recollection of storm and danger, of whales and bears and sharks and snakes, and all that used to interest me as a schoolboy. And yet whatever I could say upon such subjects someone else has said already with more authority and experience. It is rather when you look closely into the intimate workings of your own mind and spirit, the queer intuitions, the strange happenings, the inexplicable things which come suddenly to the surface and are glimpsed rather than seen, the incredible coincidences, the stories which should end one way but either end the other or else have no definite finish at all, tailing off into oblivion with ragged fringes of mystery behind them instead of the neat little knot of the tidy-minded romancer—it is these, I say, which seem to be really stranger than any fiction.

The most remarkable experiences in a man's life are those in which he feels most, and they are precisely those of which he is least disposed to talk. All the really very serious things in my life, the things which have been stamped deep into me and left their impress for ever, are things of which I could never bring myself to speak. And yet it is within the compass of just these intimate and vital things that one perceives strange forces to be moving and is conscious of vague and wonderful compulsions and directions which are, I think, the innermost facts of life. Personally, I am always conscious of the latent powers of the human spirit, and of the direct intervention into human life of outside forces which mould and modify our actions. They are usually too subtle for direct definition, but occasionally they become so crude that one cannot overlook them.

I will take a very obvious example, which I have quoted before, but which may bear re-telling, as it shows the thing in its most undeniable form. In the year 1892 I was travelling in Switzerland and had occasion to cross the Gemmi Pass. On the top of it was a lonely inn which looks down upon a populous valley on either side, but is itself entirely isolated during the winter. I supposed that it was deserted at that time, but I was told upon inquiry that this was not so. The family laid in a supply of food and remained there for some months utterly cut off from the people below them. The singularity of such a position arrested my attention, and a story began at once to form itself within my brain, in which I conceived the desperate position of a group of characters strongly antagonistic and reacting upon each other, who had no refuge from each other's company and were irresistibly impelled towards black tragedy while

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"ON THE TOP WAS A LONELY INN WHICH LOOKS DOWN UPON A POPULOUS VALLEY ON EITHER SIDE."

the golden lights of happy human life twinkled in the valleys beneath them. These ideas were still weaving themselves in my brain and building themselves up into symmetrical form in the strange semi-conscious impersonal way that such things grow, when I bought a book of Maupassant's to while away my return journey through France. It was certainly a book which I had never read before. The first story in it was called "l'Auberge"—"The Inn"—and there was the whole of my conception already finished by a master hand! It was the same inn, the Gemmi Pass, the winter, the group of characters, all complete. There was a great dog that I had not yet come upon. The rest was what I had schemed and what I would assuredly have published as my own but for this happy chance that saved me. But was it a chance? Could it have been a chance? That Maupassant had passed that way and that his quick brain had seen the possibilities of the lonely inn—that is likely enough. But that in the few days between thinking the story and writing it I should buy the one and only book in the world which would prevent me from making a fool of myself—could that be a coincidence, or was a kindly outside influence at work to save me from such an error?

Whether coincidence or guidance, it was one of those things that are stranger than fiction.

And yet I am willing to admit that without any external action at all, unless it be the malign one of some mischievous Puck, the most extraordinary coincidences do occur in life which one would certainly never dare to invent. Here is a case in point.

Since I have at various times written certain detective stories, some simple souls have been willing to identify me with my hero and to call me in to their aid when they were in distress. I have even been offered a blank cheque to take up a case. Possibly so long as it remained blank it would about represent the value which I could give in exchange. Still, I may claim with some complacency that out of half-a-dozen cases which pity or curiosity has induced me to investigate I have always reached a solution. In one notorious case I was, however, the victim of the extraordinary coincidence to which I allude. In connection with the crime I had suspicions of a certain family which I will call Wilder—not necessarily as being the direct criminals, but as knowing a good deal about the matter. One member of this family had, to my knowledge, gone to California some years before. His name was John and he was an architect by profession. Presently, from a small town in California which I will call St. Anne, I began to receive papers alluding to my investigation and scribbled all round the margins with ribald blasphemy. On one of these communications was the address from which it came. I at once wrote to the Chief of the Police of that town, giving the address and asking if he could tell me whether a John Wilder, architect, late of England, was living there. He answered me that it was so. Now, surely you would think that this was final. I had actually been able to give the name and trade of a man living six thousand miles away with nothing to direct me but a line of deduction. I was convinced that the line was correct, and I notified the British police of the result. Can it be believed that the answer I received from them some weeks later was that they had investigated the matter, that it was a coincidence, and that the John Wilder in question was a different man from him whom I sought?

The insane papers sent to me were from a well-known religious maniac who lived in the same boarding-house. This man was an American and had certainly nothing to do with the crime, but I am unable to understand even now how he came to take any interest in the matter if there were not some Englishman near him to coach him in the details. However, I can, of course, only accept the police report, as correct and claim to have been the victim of a coincidence which certainly could not be used in fiction.

It is in the twilight-land, where spirit and matter meet, that the strangest happenings occur. Sometimes they are very slight and objectless, and yet point to vast issues behind them. I remember that in Rome my wife and I were walking on the Pincio. She had never been there before nor read anything about it, for it was the first day of our visit. She suddenly said, in an abstracted voice, "There is a statue of Dante there." A few moments later we came upon the statue, which had been concealed by bushes. I said, "How could you possibly know that?" She answered, "I have no idea. I simply *knew* it." What a trivial, inconclusive episode, and yet can all science give a name or an explanation for such an incident?

I have studied the occult for thirty years, and it seems strange to me to listen to the confident opinions, generally negative ones, which are expressed upon the subject by people who have not given it really serious thought for as many minutes. This is not the time or place for me to give my views, which are still those of a student rather than of a dogmatist. But I have had one or two experiences which are a little outside the usual range of *séances* or manifestations, and also outside the range of what one could render credible in fiction. In one of these affairs I seemed to brush very close to something really remarkable, unless deception on one side and coincidence upon the other have established a strange working partnership.

I was living in the country at the time, and formed an acquaintance with a small doctor—small physically and also in professional practice—who lived hard by. He was a student of the occult, and my curiosity was aroused by learning that he had one room in his house which no one entered except himself, as it was reserved for mystic and philosophic purposes. Finding that I was interested in such subjects, Dr. Brown, as I will call him, suggested one day that I should join a secret society of esoteric students. The invitation had been led up to by a good deal of preparatory inquiry. The dialogue between us ran somewhat thus:—

"What shall I get from it?"

"In time, you will get powers."

"What sort of powers?"

"They are powers which people would

call supernatural. They are perfectly natural, but they are got by knowledge of deeper forces of Nature."

"If they are good, why should not everyone know them?"

"They would be capable of great abuse in the wrong hands."

"How can you prevent their getting into wrong hands?"

"By carefully examining our initiates."

"Should I be examined?"

"Certainly."

"By whom?"

"The people would be in London."

"Should I have to present myself?"

"No, no; they would do it without your knowledge."

"And after that?"

"You would then have to study."

"Study what?"

"You would have to learn by heart a considerable mass of material. That would be the first thing."

"If this material is in print, why does it not become public property?"

"It is not in print. It is in manuscript. Each manuscript is carefully numbered and trusted to the honour of a passed initiate. We have never had a case of one going wrong."

"Well," said I, "it is very interesting, and you can go ahead with the next step, whatever it may be."

Some little time later—it may have been a week—I woke in the very early morning with a most extraordinary sensation. It was not a nightmare or any prank of a dream. It was quite different to that, for it persisted after I was wide awake. I can only describe it by saying that I was tingling all over. It was not painful, but it was queer and disagreeable, as a mild electric shock would be. I thought at once of the little doctor.

In a few days I had a visit from him. "You have been examined and you have passed," said he, with a smile. "Now you must say definitely whether you will go on with it. You can't take it up and drop it. It is serious, and you must leave it alone or go forward with a whole heart."

It began to dawn upon me that it really was serious, so serious that there seemed no possible space for it in my very crowded and preoccupied life. I said as much, and he took it in very good part. "Very well," said he, "we won't talk of it any more unless you change your mind."

There was a sequel to the story. A month or two later, on a pouring wet day, the little doctor called, bringing with him another medical man whose name was familiar to me in connection with exploration and tropical service. They sat together beside my study fire and talked. One could not but observe that the famous and much-travelled man was very deferential to the little country surgeon, who was the younger of the two.

"He is one of my initiates," said the latter to me. "You know," he continued, turning to his companion, "Doyle nearly joined us once." The other looked at me with great interest, and then at once plunged into a conversation with his mentor as to the wonders he had seen and, as I understood, actually done. I listened amazed. It sounded like the talk of two lunatics. One phrase stuck in my memory.

"When first you took me up with you," said he, "and we were hovering over the town I used to live in in Central Africa, I was able for the first time to see the islands out in the lake. I always knew they were there, but they were too far off to be seen from the shore. Was it not extraordinary that I should first see them when I was living in England?"

There were other remarks as wonderful. "A conspiracy to impress a simpleton," says the sceptic. Well, we will leave it at that, if the sceptic so wills, but I am under the impression that I have brushed against something strange. This is one of the stories with an untidy, ragged ending such as the editor abhors.

One more queer experience which will bear telling. I volunteered once to sleep in a haunted house in Dorsetshire. Two other investigators went with me. We were a deputation from the Psychical Society—of which, by the way, I am almost an original member. It took us the whole railway journey from town to read up the evidence as to the senseless noises which had made life unendurable for the occupants, who were tied by a lease and could not get away. We sat up there two nights. On the first nothing occurred. On the second, one of our party left us and I sat up with the late Mr. Podmore, a well-known student of these things. We had, of course, taken every precaution to checkmate fraud, putting worsted threads across the stairs, and so on.

In the middle of the night a fearsome uproar broke out. It was like someone belabouring a resounding table with a heavy cudgel. It was not an accidental creaking of wood or anything of that sort, but a deafening row. We had all doors open, so we rushed at once into the kitchen, from which the sound had surely come. There was nothing

there—doors were all locked, windows barred, and threads unbroken. Podmore took away the light and pretended that we had both returned to our sitting-room, while I waited in the dark in the hope of a return of the disturbance. None came—or ever did come. What occasioned it we never knew. It was of the same character as all the other disturbances we had read about, but shorter in time. Here there was a sequel to the story. Some years later the house was burned down, which may or may not have had a bearing upon the sprite which seemed to haunt it, but a more suggestive thing is that the skeleton of a child about ten years old was dug up in the garden. This I give on the authority of a relation of the family who were so plagued. The suggestion was that the child had been done to death there, and that the subsequent phenomena, of which we had one small sample, were in some way a sequence to this tragedy.

"WE RUSHED AT ONCE INTO THE KITCHEN, FROM WHICH THE SOUND HAD SURELY COME."

There is a theory that a young life cut short in sudden and unnatural fashion may leave, as it were, a store of unused vitality which may be put to strange uses. But here again we are drifting into regions which are stranger than fiction. The unknown and the marvellous press upon us from all sides. They loom above us and around us in undefined and fluctuating shapes, some dark, some shimmering, but all warning us of the limitations of what we call matter, and of the need for spirituality if we are to keep in touch with the true inner facts of life.

PETER SAINT

By JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD.

Illustrated by Dudley Tennant.

PETER SAINT was a trapper. He set his deadfalls and fox-baits along the edge of that long, slim finger of the Great Barren which reaches out of the East well into the country of the Great Bear, far to the West. The door of his sapling-built cabin opened to the dark and chilling grey of the Arctic Circle; through its one window he could watch the sputter and play of the Northern Lights; and the curious hissing purr of the aurora had grown to be a monotone in his ears. Whence he had come, and how it was that he bore the strange name by which he went, no man had probably ever asked, for curiosity belongs to the white man, and the nearest white men were up at Fort MacPherson, a hundred or so miles away. Six or seven years ago Peter Saint had come to the post there for the first time with his furs. He had given his name as Peter Saint, and the Company had not questioned it, or wondered. Stranger names than Peter's were a part of the northland; stranger faces than his came in out of the white wilderness trails; but none was more silent, or came and went more quickly.

It would have been hard to judge his age—had one taken the trouble to try. He was not French; there was no Indian blood in him. His heavy beard was reddish, his long thick hair distinctly blond, and his eyes were a bluish-grey.

The Great Barren enveloped him and his mystery. The yapping foxes knew more of him than men. The foxes and Peter Saint! That was what this white world was made up of—foxes and Peter Saint. It was a world of strife between them. Peter Saint was killing—but the foxes were winning. Slowly but surely they were breaking him down—they and the terrible loneliness. Loneliness Peter Saint might have stood for many years yet. But the foxes were driving him mad.

What manner of man Peter Saint was or might have been, and of the strangeness of the life that was lived in the maddening loneliness of that mystery-cabin in the edge of the Barren, only one other man knew.

That man was Philip Weyman.

Two thousand miles south Philip Weyman sat at a small table in a brilliantly lighted and fashionable *café*. It was early June, and Philip had been down from the North scarcely a month. The deep tan was still in his face, and tiny wind and snow lines crinkled at the corners of his eyes. He exuded the life of the big outdoors as he sat opposite pallid-cheeked and weak-chested Barrow, the Mica King, who would have given his millions to have possessed the red blood in the other's veins. Philip had made his "strike," away up on the Mackenzie. That day he had sold out to Barrow for a hundred thousand. To-night he was filled with the flush of joy and triumph. Barrow was no older than the man who sat on the other side of the table—perhaps thirty-five—yet what a vast gulf lay between them! He with his millions—the other with that flood of red blood coming and going in his body, and his wonderful fortune of a hundred thousand! Barrow leaned a little over the table, and laughed. It was the laugh of a man who had grown tired of life, in spite of his millions. The day before yesterday a famous specialist had warned him that the threads of his life were giving way, one by one. He told this to Philip Weyman. He confessed to him, with that strange glow in his eyes—a glow that was like fire making a last fight against total extinguishment—that he would give up his millions and all he had won for the other's health and the mountain of mica.

"And if it came to a close bargain," he said, "I wouldn't hold out for the mountain. I'm ready to quit, now, Weyman. I'm ready to quit—and it's too late."

"A LOW, STIFLED CRY BROKE FROM HER ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH HIS FIRST GLIMPSE OF HER."

Which, after a little, brought Philip Weyman to tell so much as he knew of the story of Peter Saint.

Philip's voice was tuned with the winds and the forests. It rose above the low and monotonous hum about them. People at the two or three adjoining tables might have heard his story, if they had listened. Within the immaculateness of his evening dress Barrow shivered, fearing that Weyman's voice might attract undue attention to them. But other people were absorbed in themselves. Philip went on with his story, and at last, so clearly that it reached easily to the other tables, he spoke the name of Peter Saint.

Then came the interruption, and with that interruption a strange and sudden upheaval in the life of Philip Weyman that was to mean more to him than his great "strike." His eyes swept over Barrow's shoulder, and there he saw a woman. She was standing. A low, stifled cry had broken from her almost simultaneously with his first glimpse of her, and as he looked Philip saw her lips form gaspingly the name he had spoken —Peter Saint! She was so near that Barrow could have turned and touched her. Her eyes were like luminous fires as she stared at Philip. Her face was strangely white. He could see her quiver, and catch her breath. And she was looking at *him*. For that one moment she had forgotten the presence of others. Then a hand touched her arm. It was the hand of her elderly escort, in whose face were anxiety and wonder. The woman started and took her eyes from Philip. With her escort she seated herself at a table a few paces away, and for a few moments he could see that she was fighting hard for composure.

In his own breast Philip's heart was pounding like an engine. He knew that she was talking about him now, and he knew that she had cried out when he had spoken Peter Saint's name. He forgot Barrow as he looked at her. She was exquisite, even with that grey pallor that had come so suddenly into her cheeks. She was not young, as the age of youth is measured. Perhaps she was thirty, or thirty-five. If someone had asked Philip Weyman to describe her, he would have said simply that she was glorious.

Barrow had partly turned in his seat, and now, with careful breeding, he faced his companion again.

"Do you know her?" Philip asked.

Barrow shook his head.

"No." Then he added: "Did you see what made her cry out like that?"

"I believe so," said Philip, and he turned purposely, so that the four people at the next table could hear him. "I think she twisted her ankle. It's an occasional penance the women make for wearing these high-heeled shoes, you know."

He looked at her again. Her slender form was bent toward the white-haired man who was with her. The man was staring straight over at Philip, a strange, searching look in his face as he listened to what she was saying. He seemed to question him through that short distance that separated them. And then the woman turned her head slowly, and once more Philip met her eyes squarely—deep, dark, glowing eyes that thrilled him to the quick of his soul. He did not try to understand what he saw in them. Before he turned his glance to Barrow he saw that colour had swept back into her face; her lips were parted; he knew that she was struggling to suppress a tremendous emotion.

Barrow was looking at him curiously—and Philip went on with his story of Peter Saint. He told it in a lower voice. Not until he had finished did he look again in the direction of the other table. The woman had changed her position slightly, so that he could not see her face.

Suddenly Barrow drew his attention to a man sitting alone a dozen tables from them.

"There's DeVoe, one of the Amalgamated chiefs," he said. "He has almost finished, and I want to speak to him before he leaves. Will you excuse me a minute—or will you come along and meet him?"

"I'll wait," said Philip.

Barrow rose. Ten seconds later the woman's white-haired escort was on his feet. He came across to Philip's table, and seated himself casually in Barrow's chair, as though Philip were an old friend whom he had come over to chat with for a moment.

"I beg your pardon for the imposition which I am laying upon you," he said, in a low, quiet voice. "I am Colonel McCloud. The lady with me is my daughter. And you, I believe, are a gentleman. If I were not sure of that I would not have taken advantage of your friend's temporary absence. You heard my daughter cry out a few moments ago! You observed that she was—disturbed?"

Philip nodded.

"I could not help it. I was facing her. And since then I have thought that I—unconsciously—was the cause of her perturbation. I am Philip Weyman, Colonel McCloud, from Fort MacPherson—two thousand miles north of here—on the Mackenzie River. So you see, if it is a case of mistaken identity——"

"No—no—it is not that," interrupted the elder man, quickly. "As we were passing your table we—my daughter—heard you speak a name. Perhaps she was mistaken. It was—Peter Saint."

"Yes. I know Peter Saint. He is a friend of mine."

Barrow was returning. The other saw him over Philip's shoulder, and his voice trembled with a sudden and subdued excitement as he said quickly:—

"Your friend is coming back. No one but you must know that my daughter is interested in this man—Peter Saint. She trusts you. She sent me to you. It is important that she should see you to-night and talk with you alone. I will wait for you outside. I will have a taxi-cab ready to take you to our apartments. Will you come?"

He had risen. Philip heard Barrow's footsteps behind him.

"I will come," he said.

A few minutes later Colonel McCloud and his daughter left the *café*. The half-hour after that passed with leaden slowness to Philip. The fortunate arrival of two or three friends of Barrow gave him an opportunity to excuse himself on the plea of an important engagement, and he bade the Mica King good night. Colonel McCloud was waiting for him outside the *café*, and as they entered a taxi-cab he said:—

"My daughter is quite unstrung to-night, and I sent her home. She is waiting for us. Will you have a smoke, Mr. Weyman?"

With a feeling that this night had set stirring a brew of strange and unforeseen events for him, Philip sat in a softly-lighted and richly-furnished room an hour later, and waited. The colonel had been gone a full quarter-hour. He had left a box half-filled with cigars on a table at Philip's elbow, impressing him to smoke. They were an English brand of cigar, and on the box was stamped the name of the Montreal dealer from whom they had been purchased.

"My daughter will come presently," Colonel McCloud had said.

A curious thrill shot through Philip's heart as he heard her light footsteps and the soft swish of her skirt. Involuntarily he rose to his feet as she entered the room. For fully ten seconds they stood facing each other without speaking. She was dressed in a

filmy grey stuff. There was lace at her throat. She had shifted the thick bright coils of her hair to the crown of her head; a splendid glory of hair, he thought. Her cheeks were flushed, and with her hands against her breast she seemed crushing back the strange excitement that glowed in her eyes. Once he had seen a fawn's eyes that looked like hers. In them were suspense, fear—a yearning that was almost pain. Suddenly she came to him, her hands outstretched. Involuntarily, too, he took them. They were warm and soft. They thrilled him—and they clung to him.

"I am Josephine McCloud," she said. "My father has explained to you? You know—a man—who calls himself—Peter Saint?"

Her fingers clung more tightly to his, and the sweetness of her hair, her breath, her eyes, were very close as she waited.

"Yes, I know a man who calls himself Peter Saint."

"Tell me—what he is like," she whispered. "He is tall—like you?"

"No; he is of medium height."

"And his hair? It is dark—dark like yours?"

"No; it is blond, and a little grey."

"And he is young—younger than you?"

"He is older."

"And his eyes? *They* are dark?"

He felt rather than heard the throbbing of her heart as she waited for him to reply. There was a reason why he would never forget Peter Saint's eyes.

"Sometimes I thought they were blue, and sometimes grey," he said; and at that she dropped his hands with a strange little cry, and stood a step back from him, a joy which she made no effort to keep from him flaming in her face. It was a look which sent a sudden hopelessness through him—a stinging pang of jealousy. This night had set wild and tumultuous emotions aflame in his breast. He had come to Josephine McCloud like one in a dream. In an hour he had placed her above all other women in the world, and in that hour the little gods of fate had brought him to his knees in the worship of a woman. The fact did not seem unreal to him. Here was the woman, and he loved her. And his heart sank like a heavily-weighted thing when he saw the transfiguration of joy that came into her face when he said that Peter Saint's eyes were not dark, but were sometimes blue and sometimes grey.

"And this Peter Saint?" he said, straining to make his voice even. "What is he to you?"

His question cut her like a knife. The wild colour ebbed swiftly out of her cheeks. Into her eyes swept the haunting fear which he was to see and wonder at more than once. It was as if he had done something to frighten her.

"We—my father and I—are interested—in him," she said. Her words cost her a visible effort. He noticed a quick throbbing in her throat, just above the filmy lace. "Mr. Weyman, won't you pardon this—this betrayal of excitement in myself? It must be unaccountable to you. Perhaps a little later you will understand. We are imposing on you by not confiding in you what this interest is, and I beg you to forgive me. But there is a reason. Will you believe me? There is a reason."

Her hands rested lightly on Philip's arm. Her eyes implored him.

"I will not ask for confidences which you are not free to give," he said, gently.

He was rewarded by a softer glow in her eyes, a prayer of thankfulness.

"I cannot make you understand how much that means—to me," she cried, tremblingly. "And you will tell us about Peter Saint? Father——"

She turned.

Colonel McCloud had re-entered the room.

With the feeling of one who was not quite sure that he was awake Philip paused under a street lamp ten minutes after leaving the McCloud apartment, and looked at his watch. It was a quarter of two o'clock. A low whistle of surprise fell from his lips. For three hours he had been with Colonel McCloud and his daughter. It had seemed like an hour—or less. He still felt the thrill of the warm parting pressure of Josephine's hand; he saw the tender glow of thankfulness and of gratitude in her eyes; he heard her voice, low and tremulous, asking him to come again to-morrow evening. His brain was in a strange whirl of excitement, and he laughed—laughed with a gladness which he had not felt before in all the days of his life. He had told a great many things about Peter Saint that night; of his life in the little cabin, his loneliness, his aloofness, and the mystery of him. He had asked no questions of Josephine and her father, and more than once he had caught that almost tender gratitude in Josephine's eyes. And at least twice he had seen the swift, haunting fear—the first time when he told of Peter Saint's comings

and goings at Fort MacPherson, and again when he mentioned a patrol of the Royal North-West Mounted Police that had passed his cabin while he was there, laid up during those weeks of darkness and storm with a fractured leg. He told how tenderly Peter Saint nursed him, and how their acquaintance grew into brotherhood during the long grey nights when the stars gleamed like pencil-points and the foxes yapped incessantly. He had seen the dewy shimmer of tears in Josephine's eyes. He had noted the tense lines in Colonel McCloud's face as he had listened. But he had asked them no questions, he had made no effort to unmask the secret which they so evidently desired to keep from him.

Now, alone in the cool night, he asked himself a hundred questions, and yet with a feeling that he understood a great deal of what they had kept from him. Something had whispered to him then—and whispered to him now—that Peter Saint was not Peter Saint's right name, and that to Josephine McCloud and her father he was a brother and a son. This thought, so long as he could think it without a doubt, filled his cup of hope to overflowing. But the doubt persisted. It was like a spark that refused to go out. Who was Peter Saint? What was Peter Saint, the half-wild fox-hunter, to Josephine McCloud? Yes—he could be but that one thing! A brother. A black sheep. A wanderer. A son who had disappeared—and was now found. But if he was that, only *that*, why would they not tell him? The doubt sputtered up again. Philip did not go to bed. He was anxious for the day and the evening that was to follow. A woman had unsettled his world. His mica mountain became an unimportant reality. Barrow's greatness no longer loomed up for him. He walked until he was tired, and it was dawn when he went to his hotel.

He was like a boy living in the anticipation of a great promise—restless, excited, even feverishly anxious, all the next day. He made inquiries about Colonel James McCloud at his hotel. No one knew him, or had even heard of him. His name was not in the city directory or the telephone directory. He made up his mind that Josephine and her father were practically strangers in the city, and that they had come from Canada—probably Montreal, for he remembered the stamp on the box of cigars.

That night, when he saw Josephine again, he thought that she was an angel. And she was glad to see him. Her eagerness shone in her eyes, in the warm flush in her cheeks, in the joyous tremble of her voice. That night, too, passed like a dream—a dream in paradise for Philip. For a long time they sat alone, and Josephine herself brought him the box of cigars, and urged him to smoke. They talked again about the North; about Fort MacPherson—where it was, what it was, and how one got to it through a thousand miles or more of wilderness. He told her of his own adventures, how for many years he had sought for mineral treasure and at last had found a mica mountain.

"It's close to Fort MacPherson," he explained. "We can work it from the Mackenzie. I expect to start back some time in August."

She leaned toward him, last night's strange excitement glowing for the first time in her eyes.

"You are going back? You will see Peter Saint?"

In her eagerness she laid a hand on his arm.

"I am going back. It would be possible to see Peter Saint."

The touch of her hand did not lighten the weight that was tugging again at his heart.

"Peter's Saint's cabin is a hundred miles from Fort MacPherson," he added. "He will be hunting foxes by the time I get there."

"You mean—it will be winter?"

"Yes. It is a long journey. And"—he was looking at her closely as he spoke—"Peter Saint may not be there when I return. It is possible he may have gone into another part of the wilderness."

He saw her quiver as she drew back.

"He has been there—for seven years," she said, as if speaking to herself. "He would not move—*now!*"

"No; I don't think he would move now."

His own voice was low, scarcely above a whisper, and she looked at him quickly and strangely, a deepening flush in her cheeks.

It was late when he bade her good night. Again he felt the warm thrill of her hand as it lay in his. The next afternoon he was to take her driving.

The days and weeks that followed these first meetings with Josephine McCloud were weighted with many things for Philip. Neither she nor her father enlightened him about Peter Saint. Several times he believed that Josephine was on the point of confiding in him, but each time there came that strange fear in her eyes, and she caught herself. Philip did not urge. He asked no questions that might be embarrassing. He knew, after the third week had passed, that Josephine

could no longer be unconscious of his love, even though the mystery of Peter Saint restrained him from making a declaration of it. There was not a day in the week that they did not see each other. They rode together. The three frequently dined together. And still more frequently they passed the evenings in the McCloud apartments. Philip had been correct in his guess—they were from Montreal. Beyond that fact he learned but little.

As their acquaintance became closer and as Josephine saw in Philip more and more of that something which he had not spoken, a change developed in her which at first puzzled and then alarmed him. At times she seemed almost frightened. One evening, when his love all but trembled on his lips, she had turned suddenly white.

It was the middle of July before the words came from him at last. In two or three weeks he was starting for the North. It was evening, and they were alone in the big room, with the cool breeze from the lake drifting in upon them. He made no effort to touch her as he told her of his love, but when he had done she knew that a strong man had laid his heart and his soul at her feet.

He had never seen her whiter than in those moments. Her hands were clasped tightly in her lap. There was a silence in which he did not breathe after he had finished. Her answer came so low that he leaned forward to hear.

"I—I am sorry," she said. "It is my fault—that you love me. I knew. And yet I let you come—again and again. I have done wrong. It is not fair—now—for me to tell you to go—without a chance. You would want me if I did not love you? You would marry me if I did not love you?"

His heart pounded. He forgot everything but that he loved this woman with a love beyond his power to reason.

"I don't think that I could live without you—now, Josephine," he cried, in a low voice. "And I—I swear to make you love me. It must come. It is inconceivable that I cannot make you love me—loving you as I do."

She looked at him clearly now. Her face was white, her eyes like stars. She seemed suddenly to become tense and vibrant with a new and wonderful strength.

"I must be fair with you," she said. "You are a man whose love most women would be proud to possess. And yet—it is not in my power to accept that love, or give myself to you. There is another to whom you must go."

"And that is——"

"Peter Saint!"

It was she who leaned forward now, her eyes burning, her bosom rising and falling with the quickness of her breath.

"You must go to Peter Saint," she said. "You must take a letter to him—from me. And it will be for him—for Peter Saint—to say whether I am to be your wife. You are honourable. You will be fair with me. You will take the letter to him. And I will be fair with you. I will be your wife, I will try hard to care for you—if Peter Saint—says——"

Her voice broke. She covered her face with her hands, and for a few moments, stunned and powerless to speak and with a heart that had again grown like lead, Philip looked at her while her slender form trembled with sobs. She had bowed her head, and for the first time he reached out and laid his hand upon the soft glory of her hair. Its touch set aflame every fibre in him. Hope swept through him, crushing his fears like a juggernaut. It would be a simple task to go to Peter Saint! He was tempted to take her in his arms. A moment more and he would have caught her to him, but the weight of his hand on her head roused her, and she raised her face, and drew back. His arms were reaching out. She saw what was in his eyes.

"Not now," she said. "Not until you have gone to—him. Nothing in the world will be too great a reward for you if you are fair with me, for you are taking a chance. In the end you may receive nothing. For if Peter Saint says that I cannot be your wife—I cannot. He must be the arbiter. On those conditions—will you go?"

"Yes, I will go," said Philip.

It was early in August when Philip reached Edmonton. From there he took the new line of rail to Athabasca Landing; it was September when he arrived at Fort McMurray and found Pierre Gravois, a half-breed, who was to accompany him by canoe up to Fort MacPherson. Before leaving this final outpost, whence the real journey into the North began, Philip sent a long letter to Josephine.

Two days after he and Pierre had started down the Mackenzie a letter came to Fort McMurray for him. "Long" La Brie, a special messenger, brought it from Athabasca Landing. He was too late, and he had no instructions—and had not been paid—to go farther.

Day after day Philip continued steadily

northward with the letter for Peter Saint. He carried it in his breast-pocket, securely tied in a little waterproof bag. It was a thick letter, and time and again he held it in his hand, and wondered why it was that Josephine could have so much to say to the lonely fox-hunter up on the edge of the Barren. One night, as he sat alone by their fire in the chill of September darkness, he took the letter from its sack, and saw that the contents of the bulging envelope had sprung one end of the flap loose. Before he went to bed Pierre had set a pail of water on the coals. A cloud of steam was rising from it. Those two things—the steam and the loosened flap—sent a sudden thrill through Philip. What was in the letter? What had Josephine McCloud written to Peter Saint?

He looked toward sleeping Pierre; the pail of water began to bubble and sing—he drew a tense breath, and rose to his feet. In thirty seconds the steam rising from the pail would free the rest of the flap. He could read the letter, and re-seal it. Neither Josephine nor Peter Saint would ever know.

And then, like a shock, came the thought of the few notes Josephine had written to him. On each of them she had never failed to stamp her seal in a lavender-coloured wax. He had observed that Colonel McCloud had always used a seal, in bright red. On this letter to Peter Saint there was no seal! She trusted him. Her faith was implicit. And this was her proof of it. Under his breath he laughed, and his heart grew warm with new happiness and hope. "I have faith in you," she had said, at parting; and now, again, out of the letter her voice seemed to whisper to him, "I have faith in you."

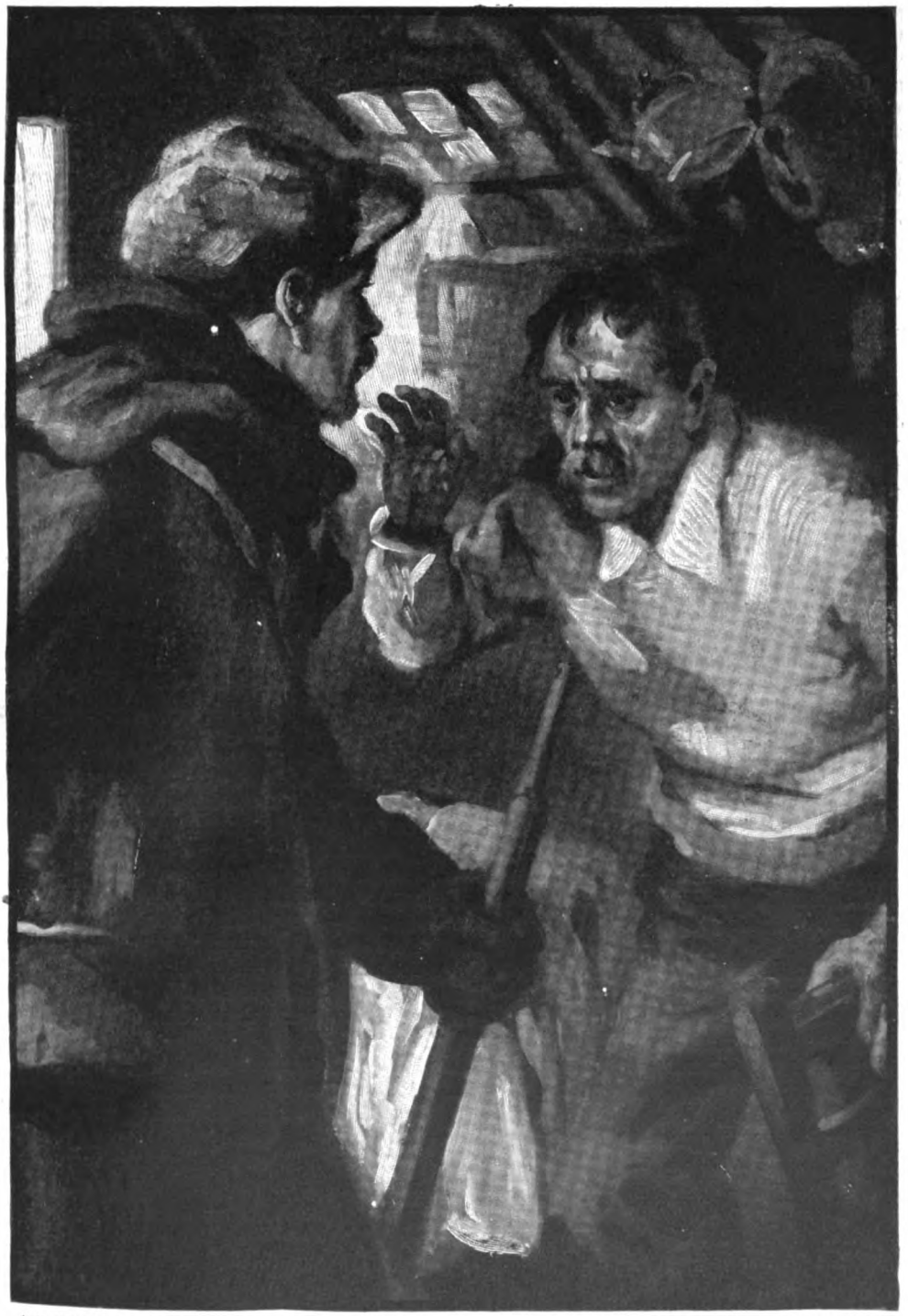
He replaced the letter in its sack, and crawled between his blankets close to Pierre.

That night had seen the beginning of his struggle with himself. This year autumn and winter came early in the North country. It was to be a winter of terrible cold, of deep snow, of famine and pestilence—the winter of 1910. The first oppressive gloom of it added to the fear and suspense that began to grow in Philip. For days there was no sign of the sun. The clouds hung low. Bitter winds came out of the North, and of nights these winds wailed desolately through the tops of the spruce under which they slept. And day after day and night after night the temptation came upon him more strongly to open the letter he was carrying to Peter Saint. He was convinced now that the letter—and the letter alone—held his fate, and that he was acting blindly. Was this justice to himself? He wanted Josephine. He wanted her above all else in the world. His chances of possessing her, even in these sunless days of suspense, he would not have exchanged for all of Barrow's millions. Then why should he not *fight* for her—in his own way? And to do that he must read the letter. To know its contents would mean—Josephine. If there was nothing in it that would stand between them he would have done no wrong, for he would still take it on to Peter Saint. So he argued. But if there *was*—if the letter jeopardized his chances of possessing her, his knowledge of what it contained would give him an opportunity to win in another way. He could even answer it himself and take back to her false-word from Peter Saint, for seven frost-biting years along the edge of the Barren had surely changed Peter Saint's handwriting. His treachery, if it could be called that, would never be discovered. And it would give him Josephine.

This was the temptation. The power that resisted it was the spirit of that big, clean, fighting North which makes men out of a beginning of flesh and bone. Ten years of that North had seeped into Philip's being. He hung on. It was November when he reached Fort MacPherson, and he had not opened the letter.

Deep snows fell, and fierce blizzards shot like gun-blasts from out of the Arctic. Snow and wind were not what brought the deeper gloom and fear to Fort MacPherson. Le Mort Rouge, or the "red death," was galloping through the wilderness. Rumours were first verified by facts from the Dog Ribs. A quarter of them were down with the dread scourge of the Northland—the smallpox. From Hudson Bay on the east to the Great Bear on the west the fur posts were sending out their runners, and a hundred Paul Reveres of the forests were riding swiftly behind their dogs to spread the warning. On the afternoon of the day Philip left for the cabin of Peter Saint a patrol of the Royal Mounted Police came in on snowshoes from the south, and voluntarily went into quarantine.

Philip travelled slowly. For three days and nights the air was filled with the "Arctic dust" snow that was hard as flint and stung like shot; and it was so cold that he paused frequently and built small fires over which he filled his lungs with hot air and smoke. He knew what it meant to have the lungs "touched"—sloughing away in the spring,



"FOR TEN SECONDS PETER SAINT STOOD AS TENSE AND MOTIONLESS AS THOUGH DEATH HAD SUDDENLY STRICKEN HIM ON HIS FEET. THEN HE SWAYED FORWARD."

blood-spitting, and certain death. On the fourth day the temperature began to rise; the fifth it was clear, and thirty degrees warmer. His thermometer had gone to sixty below. It was now thirty. It was the morning of the sixth day when he reached the thick fringe of stunted spruce that sheltered Peter Saint's cabin. He was half-blinded. The snow-filled blizzards had cut his face until it was swollen and purple. Twenty paces from Peter Saint's cabin he stopped, and stared, and rubbed his eyes—and rubbed them again—as though he were not quite sure his vision was not playing him a trick.

A cry broke from his lips then. Over Peter Saint's door there was nailed a slender sapling, and at the end of that sapling there floated a tattered, wind-beaten red rag. It was the signal. It was the one voice common to all the wilderness—a warning to man, woman, and child, white or red, that had come down through the centuries. Peter Saint was down with the smallpox!

For a few moments the discovery stunned him. Then he was filled with a chill, creeping horror. Peter Saint was sick with the scourge. Perhaps he was dying. It might be that he was dead. In spite of the terror of the thing ahead of him he thought of Josephine. If Peter Saint was dead——

Above the low moaning of the wind in the spruce tops he cursed himself. He had thought a crime, and he clenched his mittened hands as he stared at the one window of the cabin. His eyes shifted upwards. In the air was a filmy, floating grey. It was smoke coming from the chimney. Peter Saint was not dead. Something kept him from shouting Peter Saint's name, that the trapper might come to the door. He went to the window, and looked in. For a few moments he could see nothing. And then, dimly, he made out the cot against the wall. And Peter Saint sat on the cot, hunched forward, his head in his hands. With a quick breath Philip turned to the door, opened it, and entered the cabin.

Peter Saint staggered to his feet as the door opened. His eyes were wild and filled with fever.

"You—Weyman!" he cried, huskily. "My God, didn't you see the flag?"

"Yes."

Philip's half-frozen features were smiling, and now he was holding out a hand from which he had drawn his mitten.

"Lucky I happened along just now, old man. You've got it, eh?"

Peter Saint shrank back from the other's outstretched hand.

"There's—time," he cried, pointing to the door. "Don't breathe this air. Get out. I'm not bad yet—but it's the smallpox, Weyman!"

"I know it," said Philip, beginning to throw off his hood and coat. "I'm not afraid of it. I had a touch of it three years ago over on the Grey Buzzard, so I guess I'm immune. Besides, I've come two thousand miles to see you, Peter Saint—two thousand miles to bring you a letter from Josephine McCloud."

For ten seconds Peter Saint stood as tense and motionless as though death had suddenly stricken him on his feet. Then he swayed forward.

"A letter—for Peter Saint—from Josephine McCloud?" he gasped, and held out his hands.

An hour later they sat facing each other—Peter Saint and Weyman. The beginning of the scourge betrayed itself in the red flush of Peter Saint's face, and the fever in his eyes. But he was calm. For many minutes he had spoken in a quiet, even voice, and Philip Weyman sat with scarcely a breath, and a heart that at times had risen in his throat to choke him. In his hand Peter Saint held the pages of the letter he had read.

Now he went on:—

"So I'm going to tell it all to you, Weyman—because I know that you are a man. Josephine has left nothing out. She has told me of your love, and of the reward she has promised you—if Peter Saint sends back a certain word. She says frankly that she does not love you, but that she honours you above all men—except her father, and one other. That other, Weyman, is myself. Years ago the woman you love—was my wife."

Peter Saint put a hand to his head, as if to cool the fire that was beginning to burn him up.

"Her name wasn't Mrs. Peter Saint," he went on, and a smile fought grimly on his lips. "That's the one thing I won't tell you, Weyman—my name. The story itself will be enough. I've been wanting to tell it to someone for a long time, and your cleanness—your love for her—makes you my brother. Perhaps there were two other people in the world happier than we. I doubt it. I got into politics. I made an enemy—a deadly enemy—a cobra. He was a blackmailer, a thief, the head of a political ring that lived on graft. Through my efforts he was exposed. And then he laid for me—and he

got me. I must give him credit for doing it cleverly and completely. He set a trap for me, and a woman helped him. I won't go into details. The trap sprung, and it caught me. Even Josephine could not be made to believe in my innocence; so cleverly was the trap set that my best friends among the newspapers could find no excuse for me. I have never blamed Josephine for what she did after that. To all the world—and most of all to her, I was caught red-handed. I knew that she loved me even as she was divorcing me. On the day the divorce was given to her my brain went bad. The world turned red, and then black, and then red again. And I——"

Peter Saint paused again, with a hand to his head.

"You came up here," said Philip, in a low voice.

"Not—until I had seen the man who ruined me," replied Peter Saint, quietly. "We were alone in his office. I gave him a fair chance to redeem himself—to confess what he had done. He laughed at me, exulted over my fall, taunted me. And so —I killed him."

He rose from his chair and stood swaying. He was not excited.

"In his office, with his dead body at my feet, I wrote a note to Josephine," he finished. "I told her what I had done, and again I swore my innocence. I wrote her that some day she might hear from me, but not under my right name, as the law would always be watching for me. It was ironic that on that human cobra's desk there lay an open Bible —open at the Book of Peter, and involuntarily I wrote the words to Josephine—Peter Saint. She has kept my secret, while the law has hunted for me. And this——"

He held the pages of the letter out to Philip.

"Take the letter—go outside—and read what she has written," he said. "Come back in half an hour. I want to think—think—think——"

Philip took the letter as Peter Saint swayed back to his bed against the wall.

"Go," repeated Peter Saint, seeing his hesitation. "Go!"

Behind the cabin, where Peter Saint had piled his winter's fuel, Philip read the letter; and at times the soul within him seemed smothered, and at others it quivered with a strange and joyous emotion. At last vindication had come for Peter Saint, and before he had read a page of the letter Philip understood why it was that Josephine had sent him with it into the North. For nearly seven years she had known of Peter Saint's innocence of the thing for which she had divorced him. The woman—the dead cobra's accomplice—had told her the whole story, as Peter Saint a few minutes before had told it to Weyman; and during those seven years she had travelled the world seeking for him—the man who bore the name of Peter Saint. It was after this that Philip's heart grew heavier, for Josephine had written to Peter Saint not as the woman who had sent him into outlawry, but as his wife, his mate, his own soul. Each night for seven years she had prayed God that the next day she might find him, and now that her prayer had been answered she begged that she might come to him, and share with him for all time a life away from the world they knew. Her love breathed like a living thing in the pages Philip read, yet with that wonderful message to Peter Saint she pilloried herself for those red and insane hours in which she had lost faith in him. She had no excuse for herself, except her great love; she crucified herself even as she held out her arms to him across that thousand miles of desolation. Frankly she had written of the great price she was offering for this one chance of life and happiness. She told of Philip's love, and of the reward she had offered him should Peter Saint find that in his heart love had died for her. Which should it be?

Twice Philip read that wonderful message he had brought into the North, and he envied Peter Saint, the outlaw. He had killed, but he had killed with justice—and a love such as few men had ever possessed was reaching out to crown him with its glory.

The thirty minutes were gone when he again entered the cabin. Peter Saint was waiting for him. He motioned him to a seat close to him.

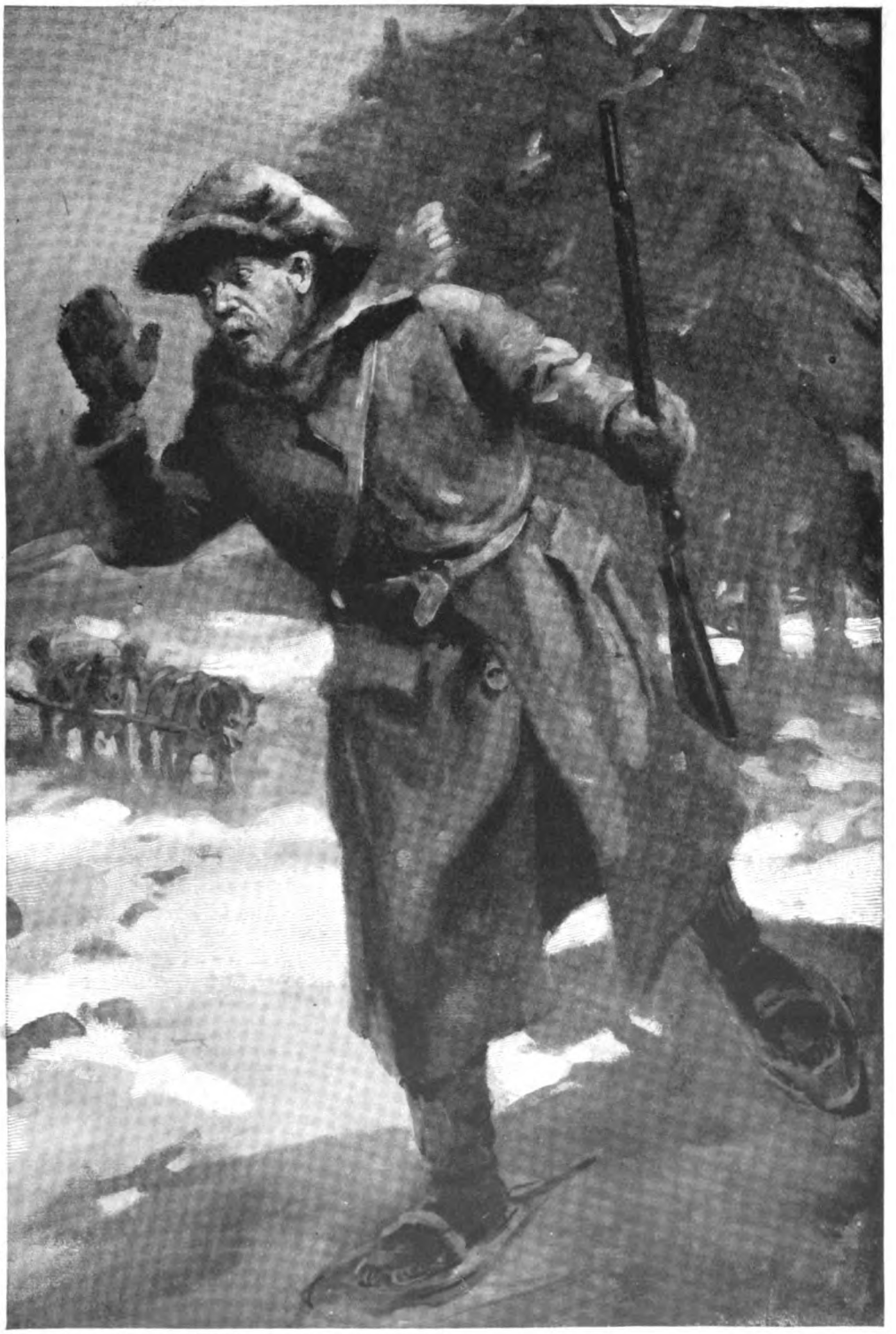
"You have read it?" he asked.

Philip nodded. In these moments he did not trust himself to speak. Peter Saint understood. The flush was deeper in his face; his eyes burned brighter with the fever, but of the two he was the calmest, and his voice was steady when he spoke.

"I haven't much time, Weyman," he said, and he smiled faintly as he folded the pages of the letter. "My head is cracking. But I've thought it all out, and you've got to go back to her—and tell her that Peter Saint is dead."

A gasp broke from Philip's lips. It was his only answer.

"WITH A CRY OF WARNING PHILIP DARTED IN PURSUIT.



HE OVERTOOK THE FIGURE AT THE CABIN DOOR."

"It's—best," continued Peter Saint, and he spoke more slowly, but firmly. "I love her, Weyman. God knows that it's been only my dreams of her that have kept me alive all these years. She wants to come to me, but it's impossible. I'm an outlaw. The law won't excuse my killing of—the cobra. We'd have to hide. All our lives we'd have to hide. And—some day—they might get me. There's just one thing to do. Go back to her. Tell her Peter Saint is dead. And—make her happy—if you can."

For the first time something rose and overwhelmed the love in Philip's breast.

"She—wants to come to you," he cried, and he leaned toward Peter Saint, white-faced, clenching his hands. "She wants to come!" he repeated. "And the law won't find you. It's been seven years—and God knows no word will ever go from me. It won't find you. And—if it should—you can fight it together—you—and Josephine."

With a cry Peter Saint held out his hands.

"*Now* I know I need have no fear in sending you back," he spoke huskily. "You're—a man. And you've got to go. She can't come to me, Weyman. It would kill her—this life. Think of a winter here—madness—the yapping of the foxes——"

Philip sprang forward as Peter Saint crumpled down on his bunk.

After that came the long dark hours of fever and delirium. They crawled along into days, and day and night Philip fought to keep life in the body of the man who had given the world to him, for as the fight continued he began more and more to accept Josephine as his own. He had come fairly. He had kept his pledge. And Peter Saint had spoken. In the hollow of his hand he held the life of the man who still might stand between him and happiness, but thought of his former temptations sickened him now. Peter Saint understood what he had gone through, and what this man who loved the woman who had been his wife had done for him, when he came out of his first delirium. Philip would never forget the pressure of his hot hands, or the look in his eyes, when he said again and again:—

"You must go. You must tell her Peter Saint is dead."

And Philip began to accept this, not altogether as his joy, but as his duty. He would not argue with Peter Saint when he rose from his sick-bed. He would go back to Josephine.

For fifteen days he and Peter Saint fought with the "red death" in the little cabin. On the sixteenth he knew that they had won. That day he walked several miles back into the stunted spruce on his snow-shoes and shot a caribou. It was mid-afternoon when he returned with a haunch on his shoulder. Three hundred yards from the cabin something stopped him like a shot. He listened. From ahead of him came the whining and snarling of dogs, the crack of a whip, a shout which he could not understand. He dropped his burden of meat and sped on. At the southward edge of a level open he stopped again. Straight ahead of him was the cabin. A hundred yards to the right of him was a dog-team and a driver. Between the team and the cabin a hooded and coated figure was running in the direction of the danger-signal at the end of the sapling pole.

With a cry of warning Philip darted in pursuit. He overtook the figure at the cabin door. His hand caught it by the arm. It turned—and he stared into the white, terror-stricken face of Josephine McCloud.

"Good God!" he cried, and that was all.

She gripped him with both hands. He had never heard her voice as it was now. She answered the amazement in his face.

"I sent you a letter," she cried, pantingly, "and it didn't overtake you. "As soon as you were gone I knew that I must come—that I must follow—that I must speak with my own lips what I had written. Oh, I tried to catch you! But you travelled faster. Oh, God! you will forgive me—you will forgive me——"

She turned to the door. He held her.

"It is the smallpox," he said.

"I know," she panted. "The man over there—told me what the little flag means. And I'm glad—glad I came in time to let him know how badly I want him—by going in to him—as he is. And you—you—must forgive!"

She snatched herself free from his grasp. The door opened. It closed behind her. A moment later he heard through the sapling door a strange cry—a woman's cry—a man's cry—and he turned and walked heavily back into the spruce forest.

And, even as his own last hope died, and the world grew dark about him, Philip's grief was softened by a strange gladness—a rejoicing in his soul that out of years of pain and suffering had at last come happiness for these two. For something told him that the dark wings of death had faded away from over the cabin of Peter Saint, and that new life and a great joy had come to make paradise of the Arctic night that was drawing in swiftly about him.

CONJURERS OF ALL COUNTRIES.

By FREDERIC CULPITT.

WHEN a conjurer goes a-conjuring in foreign countries the first thing he does—after he has attended to the task of earning his living—is to go and see the performances of other conjurers. That, at any rate, has always been my custom. In the course of my tours abroad, therefore, I have seen many kinds of conjuring, and I have come to the conclusion that, in spite of the tall stories one sometimes hears of the marvels of the magicians of the East, the European conjurer is still first at the game.

Only once have I seen a performance which completely baffled me, and in justice to myself I wish to add that I have not come across any conjurer who could give me a satisfactory explanation of the mystery. The good average conjurer, looking on at a performance of a new trick for the first time, might not be able to give you a satisfactory explanation of the whole thing, but he would certainly point to the path which, if followed carefully, would lead to the whole secret.

But the trick I am about to describe was so good that no explanation fits it. Conjurers to whom I have told the story have advanced all the theories which would naturally occur to conjurers, and not one of them is of any use.

It happened at Dinapore, in the compound of the commissioner's house. My wife and I were among the guests of the commissioner at dinner. When dinner was nearly over our host asked us if we would like to see the performance of a native conjurer, a "jadoo-wallah" with a great reputation. The man was sent for, and he arrived at the end of the dinner and performed on the steps leading from the compound to the dining-room. This room was a three-sided one, and there was no kind of door or screen between the open side and the compound. At the top of the steps were some pillars, but they were so far apart that the native conjurer, standing with outstretched arms, could not touch them. That point is important to anyone who cares to think of a solution to this puzzle.

Having salaamed to the company, the conjurer, who wore only a turban and loin-cloth, asked, "What would the *sahib* like to drink?"

The reply was, "Soda-water." The magician then pronounced a kind of invocation to "Ramsamee," the patron saint of the "jadoo-wallahs," and a bottle of soda-water appeared in his hands.

Everybody laughed. We all thought that the trick was good, but not wonderfully good. I think the general impression was that the conjurer had been favoured by luck, and that we had hit upon the very bottle that he had happened to have concealed either in his turban or his loin-cloth.

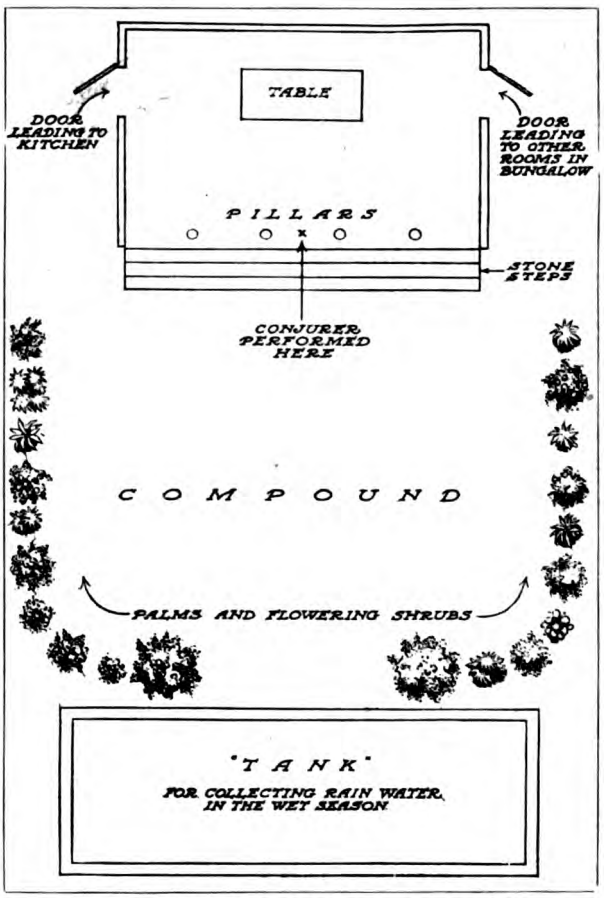
The "jadoo-wallah" was annoyed by our laughter. He asked again, "What would the *sahib* like to drink?" and someone suggested a particular kind of Japanese beer that is sold in India. A bottle of this beer appeared immediately in the conjurer's hands. The guests looked curiously at each other; the proceedings seemed to be getting uncanny.

Once more the magician asked us to choose any kind of drink we pleased, and someone said, "A bottle of wine." The magician angrily called upon his patron saint to help him; in fact, he was rather rude to the saint. But while the company were half hoping that this miracle would not be accomplished a bottle of wine came hurtling through the air, struck the magician on the head, and broke into many pieces. The magician salaamed and left us.

I had been performing in Calcutta at the time, and so our host asked me if I could give any explanation of what I had seen. I admitted that I had no clue to the mystery; I have none now. Our host assured me that every time that the magician performed the bottles he produced were subsequently missed

from a local shop. That was as far as he could go in solving the mystery.

My readers will note that the magician had quite a number of difficulties to overcome in presenting that trick. He had to be prepared with a variety of bottles—all full. He had to steal those bottles. He had to conceal them in some way before the performance. He had to be in readiness to perform at any time. He had to devise some method of producing a bottle instantaneously without anyone seeing the slightest suspicious movement of his hands, and his only clothes were a turban and a loin-cloth. I once saw an Indian magician produce a snake, but my eyes told me that the snake had been concealed in the man's turban.



"WHAT WOULD THE SAHIB LIKE TO DRINK?"

A plan of the compound in which the mysterious Indian trick was performed.

I was once present when the rope trick was performed, but I did not see it. Two of my friends saw it, and one of them can corroborate what I am about to say. (The other man was recently killed in action.)

Everyone knows what apparently happens in the rope trick. The Indian conjurer throws a rope into the air. It remains rigid; a boy climbs up it and disappears into space. He afterwards reappears beside the conjurer. That is the bald outline of the trick, but it is occasionally filled in with other details.

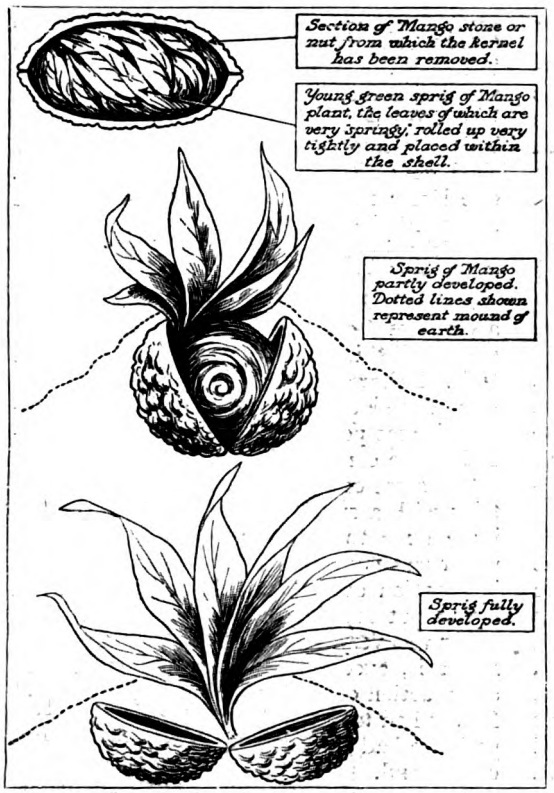
The performance at which I was present took place in a large open space—a market square. The time was about half-past two. The ground on which the conjurer stood was at least one hundred yards from any house. I mention that fact because it knocks over the theory, advanced by some conjurers, that the rope is held up in the air by a thin line stretched between the roofs of two houses.

The conjurer began with the performance of some little tricks which permitted him to approach his audience individually.

He then took the rope from a basket and asked someone to examine it. The conjurer then told his audience what he was doing, and he emphasized each point. "The rope I now throw into the air—it remains—the boy will now climb—there he goes—he reaches to the top—the boy now screams—the boy now refuses to come down—something is the matter with the boy—curse him—the boy has gone—the rope falls to the ground," and so on. Finally the boy was discovered under a sheet on the ground.

The magician spoke rapidly and in very good English. I believe I was the only one present who did not look at the rope during the whole of the performance, and my explanation of the famous trick is that it is done by hypnotism and suggestion. The only thing I saw was this. I saw the conjurer throw the rope in the air; I saw it fall at once to the ground. But my friend is certain that he saw the whole trick as it is usually described.

I am aware that the explanation—hypnotism—is not accepted by conjurers older and more experienced than I am, but to them I reply, with all respect: I was there; I know what I saw; all the doctors I have spoken to about the trick assure me that it could



be performed by means of hypnotism. The reader will recall the fact that the performer did not begin with the rope trick. He began with a lot of little tricks, and at times the conjurer was practically performing to an audience of one. I am convinced that in this way he was able to hypnotize his audience.

At Benares I saw a native magician perform a clever but rather repulsive little trick. He invited his audience to examine his tongue, and he held his tongue so that each one could have a good look at it. He then put a five-inch nail right through his tongue without causing himself any inconvenience.

The conjurer had a false tongue concealed, at the beginning of the performance, in the folds of his sash. The tongue was made of india-rubber and it had a slit in the middle. At the critical moment in the trick the performer brought this tongue into his mouth and drew it out as his own tongue. The explanation seems childishly simple, but the performance was marvellously well done, and so realistic that some of the onlookers shuddered.

Everyone has heard of the marvellous mango trick, how the native conjurer plants a stone in the ground and causes a mango tree to grow instantaneously from it. This is how the effect is produced.

The conjurer prepares a mango stone or nut by cutting it in halves, taking out the kernel, and filling it with a young green sprig of a mango plant. The leaves are very springy. The two halves are fastened together with clay, and the prepared stone is concealed in the conjurer's belt. Another stone is handed round for examination. The prepared stone is placed in the ground and a little water sprinkled over it. This causes the clay to soften and the stone to open, releasing part of the green sprig inside it. The conjurer sprinkles more water from his "chatty," and the sprig expands again. He covers it with a cloth, and in doing so secretly adds another sprig. The process is repeated. Sometimes the performance stops at the growth of a tree two feet high; sometimes there is an elaborate version of the trick which concludes with the production of a mango tree with fruit upon it. When this is done the last part of the tree is fixed into a little socket on the lower part of the tree.

I once saw a Cingalese conjurer doing a weird trick with a sack of stones. He called attention to the fact that he was very thin and needed food. He then sat down and swallowed a stone from his sack; you could see the big lump sliding down his throat. He continued to swallow stones until he had consumed about thirty. Then he stood up

and walked round, and you could hear the stones rattling inside him.

This was a sleight-of-hand trick. The conjurer concealed the first stone under his tongue. In putting the next stone into his mouth he secretly took the first one out and put it back into the bag in the act of taking out the third. Thus he always had one stone in his mouth. The uncanny rattling noise in his interior was caused by the stone in his mouth knocking against his teeth; his tongue did that part of the trick for him. A schoolboy will show you how to make a bump in the throat.

The conjurers of the Australian aborigines do not call themselves conjurers; they are "witch-doctors," and their performances are given, not as exhibitions of tricks, but as proof of their influence over inanimate objects. When I was at Brisbane I went to the habitation of one of these "holy men." I showed him a little coin trick in which he was greatly interested, but he waved it aside as being something beneath his notice. He then conducted our party to a little creek on the bank of which were some hundred and fifty trunks of eucalyptus trees. He asked us to watch one of these trunks. He called out to it, and it moved slowly down the bank and tumbled into the water. He beckoned to it, and it came into the centre of the stream, turned round two or three times, and eventually crawled out of the river to us.

The secret of this mystery was so absurdly apparent that it seemed impossible that even a witch-doctor of the Australian aborigines would think its performance worth while. It was easy to see that the tree-trunk was hollow and that its movements were brought about by means of two concealed assistants and a long piece of very fine fibre made out of a trailing vine which was hidden by the rushes growing on the bank of the creek. We were informed that this was the show trick of the witch-doctor.

A native girl of the "doctor" was supposed to be able to cure most diseases. She "operated" with great success on a native who had been hurt with a boomerang. She prayed over him, put her mouth on his chest, and immediately spat out a quantity of blood. She then told her patient that she had taken the bad blood from him and that he would be well at once, and immediately he felt better. This unpleasant trick was caused by a small shell concealed in the performer's mouth. She lacerated her mouth with this shell and so caused blood to flow.

Tricks similar to these are performed by the "doctors" on the West Coast of Africa.

At Simla I saw a clever trick performed by a conjurer from Tibet. He picked up some snow, rolled it into a snowball, and set alight to it. I showed him an English trick, and he then explained that he had secretly introduced some pellets of camphor into his snowball. The camphor blazed away merrily.

The same conjurer also showed me a clever trick with a small brass bowl of water. He invited me to dip my fingers into it. The water was icy cold. He then pronounced an incantation over the water and again asked me to put my fingers into the bowl. The water was very hot. I will not say any more about it, except that the secret lay in the construction of the bowl and that, as the performer had taken up his pitch on a mountain path, he had doubtless prepared for the trick beforehand.

A Japanese conjuring performance begins at noon and ends at nine, and therefore it is rather fortunate for the performers that there are not "two houses a night" in Japan. The Japanese magician is fond of using tables

"THE WITCH-DOCTOR CALLED OUT TO THE TREE, AND IT CAME INTO THE CENTRE OF THE STREAM AND EVENTUALLY CRAWLED OUT OF THE RIVER TO US."

draped to the floor in his performance, and he employs other devices which would not be tolerated over here. The favourite tricks consist for the most part of the magical production of quantities of silk and other things from boxes. I once saw a man produce a quantity of sunshades in this way, and when he had opened all of them and made them fast on the floor of the stage the effect was very good. Another favourite "production trick" is that in which a number of lanterns are shown, but the Japanese conjurer never finishes the trick in the way that a European conjurer would present it; the lanterns never have lights in them.

Another favourite trick in Japan is the magical production of streams of water from all sorts of impossible places. It has been presented in this country, but to see it at its best one has to see it in Japan.

I was present at an exhibition given by some "fire-walkers" in Japan. The performance was really part of a religious ceremony, over which a priest presided. It was held in a grove of trees, and was very impressive. In the centre was a circular pit twenty feet in diameter and about two feet deep. Poles were placed at the top of the pit forming a kind of grid. Dried palm leaves and pieces of wood were stacked up over the poles.

We were told that the fire in the pit had been alight for a long time before the ceremony. The priests took off their sandals and walked over the red-hot charcoal. The clothes of the priests had evidently been made fireproof, and I am quite prepared to believe that the feet of the fire-walking priests had been hardened with a solution of alum. The sorcerers of the Fiji Islands have a similar ceremony, but there large stones take the place of the red-hot charcoal.

The favourite tricks of the Chinese conjurers consist in producing large bowls of water and dishes of fruit. As to the explanation of these mysteries, all I need say is that in the opinion of some European conjurers any man who wears a Chinese robe ought to be able to produce a giraffe if he were minded to do so.

"THERE WAS A LITTLE SPACE BETWEEN THE GOWN AND THE LOWER PART OF THE VEST, AND THAT WAS WHERE THE CHICKENS RESIDED UNTIL THEY WERE NEEDED FOR THE TRICK."

An Egyptian street conjurer gave me a delightful little performance at Ismailia. He performed the trick of the cups and balls. Three little cups and three balls were used. The balls were made to dodge about invisibly from one cup to another in the usual way, but finally the conjurer produced live chickens under the cups. This man wore a long gown, cut away over the chest to show a kind of vest of dark red cloth trimmed with braid. There was a little space between the gown and the lower part of the vest, and that was where the chickens resided until they were needed for the trick. The conjurer could manipulate a live chicken as easily as an English conjurer can perform with a ball.

This same conjurer also showed me the Egyptian version of a very old trick known as "The ring on the wand." When an English conjurer performs this trick he borrows a ring, covers it with a handkerchief, gives it to someone to hold, asks someone else to hold the ends of his wand, and magically causes the ring to appear on the wand, although the two ends are still being held. This Egyptian conjurer did the same trick, but he did not cover the ring with a handkerchief, and that is a little detail which will be appreciated by all conjurers. It would not be fair to disclose this man's secret, but I may be permitted to say that the performance was brought about by means of a very clever substitution of the borrowed ring by another ring. At the end of the trick, however, the borrowed ring was undoubtedly on the wand, although the ends of the wand had been held all the time by a member of the audience.

SAM BRIGGS BECOMES A SOLDIER.

XII.—A Fighting Man.

By RICHARD MARSH.
Illustrated by Charles Pears.

AN officer in His Majesty's Army! Well, for one thing, he is a gentleman. I don't mean to say anything silly, but the one thing I never should be was that; I've got more sense. I might be any jolly old thing—a real good sort, a fine soldier, anything the Commanding Officer liked; but exactly what I mean by a gentleman—never! The funny part of it was that I didn't mind; and in one sense, since I had fought for my King and country, nothing else mattered. I felt that from the first moment in which I had joined the great host of Tommy Atkins.

As for the special sense in which an officer should be a gentleman—well, it couldn't be helped, I wasn't; that was all there was to it. I had been appointed an officer—on a sudden the feeling went all over me—because I had been held to be worthy; that was all that was needed. I would take care that I should never be held unworthy. Did any regiment want more? Well, if it did, the regiment wasn't worth much.

I was thinking things over—I am pretty quick sometimes in doing it—while the others stared.

"Well, Sam," asked Louisa, "what's the matter? I am glad to hear that you've been appointed Lieutenant Briggs, though perhaps you'll tell me if, in your opinion, I am to laugh or cry; because perhaps you will let me say, before anyone expresses an opinion of any kind, that to my thinking there is no position in the Army you're not entitled to hold."

I tried to keep her in her place—women do say such silly things; but it wasn't easy to do it.

"Louisa, it's a pity you can't talk more sense. It will be enough for you and for all of us. I shall find it hard to be a lieutenant without making a fool of myself. When you talk, even in joke, about going on to be majors and colonels and all the rest of it—why, I am no more capable of being that than I am of flying to the moon, and that's all there is about it."

But it was not easy to keep Louisa in her place, and everyone knows that, in some ways, where women are concerned, no man ever can do that. The funny part was when it began to be something more than whispered round the ward what had happened. Men, and boys, and nurses, and everyone came offering their congratulations—some of the patients came out of bed and right down the ward. Of course, all I had to say was that I had nothing else to do but let them say it.

"There is one remark I have to make," I told them, "and that is, that it's just as well I've had a good bit of sleep, or you chaps would make me lose my silly head, and then a fine start I should have as Lieutenant Briggs. Louisa Briggs," I said, "there's another remark I have to make. You notice how these gentlemen, men of the world and brave soldiers, regard your brother with something almost like respect—mind that you do likewise."

But when I observed her manner as she took the War Office document in her hand I had my doubts; nor did the remark she made fill me with complete conviction.

"PRESENTLY SHE WHISPERED TWO SHAKY WORDS: 'LIEUTENANT BRIGGS!' AND I FELT SOMETHING WET UPON MY CHEEK."

"Oh, yes, Sam dear," she observed—and smiled, "you may be quite sure of my doing that. Lieutenant Samuel Briggs! How splendid it sounds! When you are present in the room shall I ever dare to lift my frightened eyes towards your awe-inspiring face, and form, and figure? Robert Sparrow, salute your future brother-in-law, and remember what a mere private owes to a Lieutenant!"

She got on to her feet and she bowed, to me. I believe she really meant her bow to be a salute. Some of them laughed. She held her head up higher.

"I fear I amuse the company; my military methods are a little off. It's all practice; I shall know precisely how to salute even a general before very long; you wait until the Briggs family gets going. A telegram for Lieutenant Briggs. The nation sends congratulation?—what?"

An orderly had come down the ward. I took the telegram he brought. Louisa might laugh—she seemed to be laughing at everything—but I valued the message conveyed in that telegram before anything I had ever had.

"The Commanding Officer and officers of the Ninth Royal British Rifles congratulate Lieutenant Samuel Briggs on his promotion."

I read it aloud at Louisa's suggestion. Afterwards the subject was changed. Men scattered in every direction; I was left alone with my letters, my papers, my inquiries. It seemed to me that the nation had sent its congratulations. A chap of my sort promoted to a commission in His Majesty's Army! I had a sort of feeling that I had gone up higher; it was a hard task which was set me—never to come down again.

After lunch, when the hospital was taking it easy, Dora came. She just came slipping down along the beds, and although my back was towards her I knew it was she. She leaned over me, her arm was round my neck, and then she kissed me. Presently she whispered two shaky words: "Lieutenant Briggs!" and I felt something wet upon my cheek.

It was worth going through; I would have gone through it all again if I had had the chance. That girl's kiss crowned everything. I didn't know then if I ever could be a man again—the whole of a man; I was half blind and I was lame, and there were pieces missing from me all over the place; I didn't know if I should ever stand up with other men in the ranks again; and she didn't know if I was ever going to be more than odds and ends again—and she kissed me! I looked at her after a while.

"You looked at me before you kissed me?"

"Sam!" and she kissed me again.

"I've asked nurse to let me look at myself, but she never would let me; am I very bad?"

She was very frank. It isn't Dora's way

to shirk the truth—if the truth were better told.

"Well, Sam, it's not easy to see how you look just at present, you are such a lot of bandage; but as far as I can see, before very long every girl in England will be looking for a chance to kiss you. What I'm afraid of is that they may be inclined to forget that you're private property already."

"Do you know what I've been wondering?"

"Something silly; I saw it coming."

"If they have given me my commission because I never shall be able to take my place in the ranks."

A voice came from behind.

"What's that? What does he mean? I am Dr. Deming, his medical man, the chap who put him together."

Dora was silent for some seconds, then she looked round and said to Dr. Deming:—

"I am Dora Wilkinson, the girl who is willing to marry him, if he will have her. He's afraid that his brother officers won't admit him to their ranks, because you have made such a mess of him."

He came to my bedside and, leaning forward, looked at me.

"Briggs, one man can't pronounce on the appearance of another. There have been times when I've wondered what you were going to look like. I never saw you until you blew up half Germany. At the beginning you looked like nothing on earth—you certainly didn't look as if you were a man. Miss Wilkinson, a hero isn't necessarily all that a woman's fancy paints him; but if Lieutenant Briggs has nothing worse to find fault with than his looks, he will do. When you take your place among those whom the King delighteth to honour you will find, Lieutenant Briggs—and I am betting a fiver on it!—that you will pass muster with the rest."

Of course, I know that Nature hasn't done much in the way of making me attractive. Well, if I am not so much worse than I was, a little of me on the wall in a photograph to illustrate "Britain's Brightest" may not ruin the cigar altogether.

Dr. Deming stayed to tea. Quite a crowd of people were at Dora's tea-party; as this was a special occasion there was a sort of a kind of a feast. It is extraordinary how many people there were I seemed to know, and who knew me, though it seemed years since I had seen them. There were chaps from my own mess who "teaed" with us. Dora seemed to make quite a hit; she is every inch a lady, trust her!—whatever her husband is going to be. Second cups were going round when there came the sensation of the day, from Dr. Deming. He took a letter-case out of his pocket, and from the case a scrap of paper.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "I have an announcement to make. I don't know to what extent it is news to you; but as I have received it from a very private source, however many of you may have guessed it, the actual information is fresh. I've learnt this afternoon that there has been another addition to the list of honours. He is rather an anxious individual just now, that I happen to know; considering what he was a little while ago I am not surprised. You can pay, I'm told, too dearly even for valour. If out of a number of pieces lying round the countryside you're not certain which is you, the position is a little delicate. I admit quite frankly that there were moments in which I wasn't certain which was Sam Briggs; to-day that is a matter which I leave you to decide

"THE ANNOUNCEMENT I HAVE TO MAKE IS THAT AMONG THE SAMUEL

for yourselves—as possibly Miss Wilkinson has done. The announcement, ladies and gentlemen, which I have to make—I see that some of you have been guessing already—I say, the announcement I have to make is that among the names of those who have achieved the Victoria Cross—for valour—is Lieutenant Samuel Briggs ! "

I got away on what they called " short sick leave " after all ; it took me weeks instead of days. They kept passing me on from one sick man's place to another.

The women were in England. Bob Sparrow was to act as sort of orderly-companion. We crossed from Havre, got to Southampton in the early afternoon—and there the fun began. Mother, Dora, and Louisa were waiting for us on Southampton pier. As we came up alongside the quay I was struck by the number of people who seemed to be about.

" What's all this ? " I asked of an official who stuck pretty close to my side, and who seemed to be more interested in me than I was in him.

" Well, sir, that depends." The fellow

NAMES OF THOSE WHO HAVE ACHIEVED THE VICTORIA CROSS—FOR VALOUR—IS LIEUTENANT BRIGGS ! "

One or other of my numberless wounded points was always going wrong. I thought there never would be an end to it—wasn't I sick of myself ! When at last I started from Havre on what they called " short sick leave " I wondered after what sort of " short sick leave " they would get me back again. I had never taken any sort of leave since I had been out, not even for one day. Dozens of men had had week-ends, days, even weeks ; somehow circumstances of all sorts had been against me ; either I had been too busy when I wanted it, or I was in the wrong place. I don't know how it was, but somehow things always had happened, and now I was down for " short sick leave."

looked at me in a way I didn't understand. I don't know if he was a sailor, or what he was doing ; from the way in which he exchanged glances with the other people on the boat I understood still less. " It depends on whether you are Lieutenant Samuel Briggs."

I stared at the man. " What on earth do you mean ? What on earth does it matter to those loafers who I am ? "

" Well, sir, I think you'll find it matters a good deal. Would you like to dodge them ? "

" Dodge them ? What's up ? Those people are total strangers to me. I see my mother as well as two ladies, who, I suspect,

are here with her to meet me. I shall be very much obliged if you will see that I am able to land without any fuss. Sparrow, see about it, there's a good chap."

Sparrow laughed; I am afraid the other man did likewise.

"Aren't you aware, Lieutenant Briggs, that at this present moment you are perhaps one of the most famous men in the world, and that whenever you are likely to be seen there will be a crowd to see you? The crowd won't inquire if you wish to see them, they want to see you—and they are going to see you if they can."

So it seemed from my first experience. How they came to find out that I was coming by that boat is more than I can say. How long it took me before I was able to get rid of them I am unable to state in plain words; all I know is that I was ready to get back to hospital, and that my mother, who can't bear crowds, and the two girls didn't know whether to go off their heads. I had meant to go straight on to town, but by the time it had been made clear that accommodation of a reasonable kind was not likely to be obtainable by any ordinary train, I came to the conclusion that it would have to be a case of still another hospital.

I won't say where we slept the night—it cost a great deal of money and is a sort of State secret—like the censored letters which we used to send, headed "Somewhere in Flanders." So far as I was concerned I slept like forty tops; I did no talking; I believe I was asleep before my head was on the pillow, and at some extraordinarily early hour in the morning, almost as early as any in the trenches, I was propped up in the corner of a railway carriage on my way to town. Advice had been obtained, and it had been suggested that we should step off the train before it reached its journey's end. While the day still was young we were being hurried from one platform to another of, at t season of the year, a little-used river statio twenty minutes afterwards we were hav breakfast within a short distance of Water Junction; and still a little later I, for one, congratulating myself on being back ag in the ancestral halls at Walham Green.

The curious sensation—England again! should not have thought that I should h been so struck by its curiosity. Everyth was familiar, except the one feeling— feeling that I was a hunted man. The p was even better than I expected—lighter his movements, brisker. He had actua been taking a regular course of some sort gymnastic exercises; he wanted to give hints as to the best sort of thing of the k for me to do. My description of the eve of the previous day obviously struck him funny.

"My dear Sam," he assured me, light "you'll soon get used to that kind of thi I assure you that two or three times late have found it difficult to get through streets myself—because I was your fath Getting from the General Post Office to Broadway, Walham Green, the other even took me nearly two hours. If the police had interfered I don't know how long it might have taken!"

"My dear father, which way did come?"

"Oh, by bus; the people followed nearly all the way."

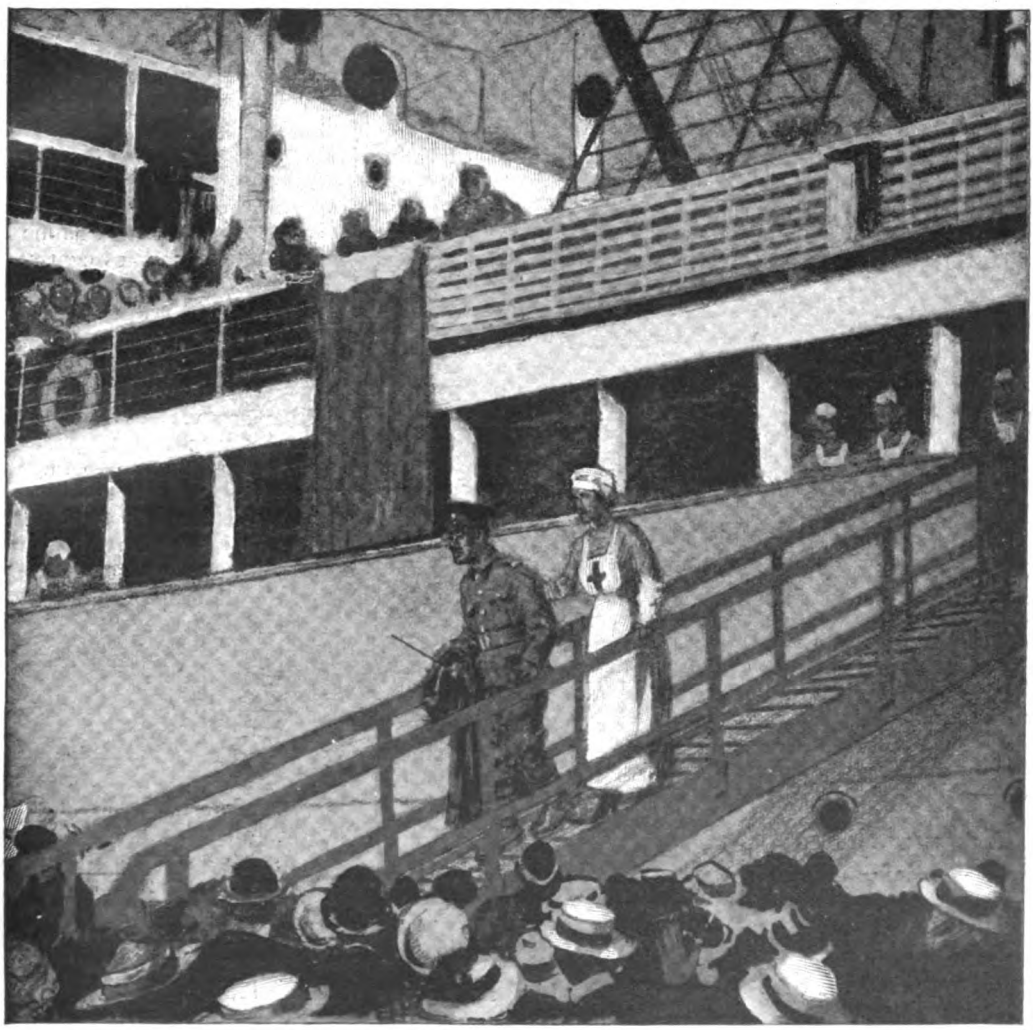
"But, surely, you might have escaped t form of attention."

"Why should I? It was a lovely evenin why should I be forced to go indoors in a fu tube? Besides—I will be frank—it rather amusing after all; the public inter was not inexcusable. You should h Dora's father, Mr. Wilkinson—your partn my dear boy—upon the subject."

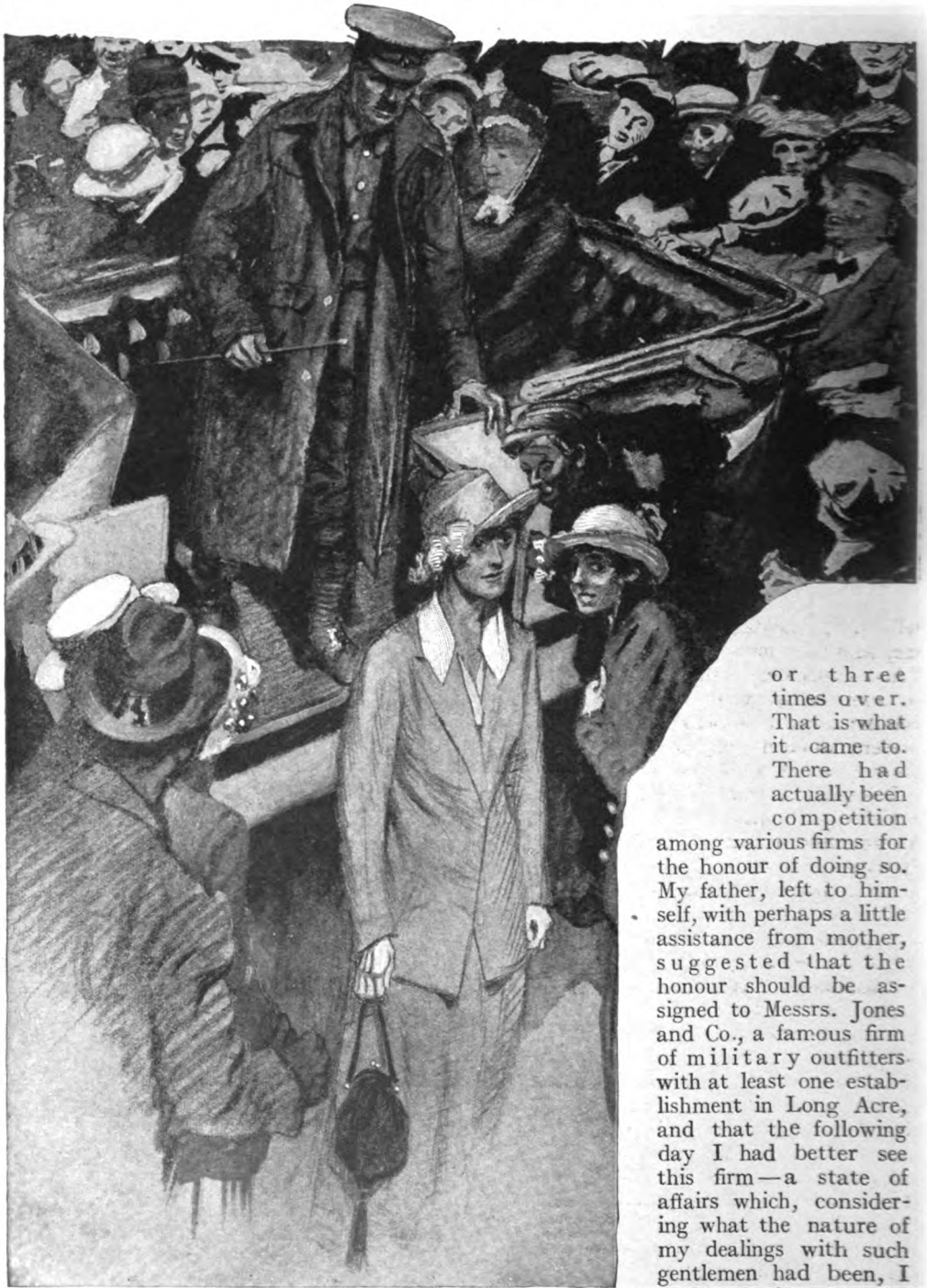
Presently I began to hear about ot

things—principally about my uniform as an officer. It seemed that a cheque had come from the Government to pay for all that was required some weeks before, when I was still hanging between life and death, with an inclination towards the latter. It was for a sum which startled me; I knew very little about such matters. That a sum of nearly one hundred pounds should have been sent me to buy the necessary things, which I never should have been able to purchase unaided—to me, in my ignorance, that was a startler. The cash had already been deposited with Messrs. Cox and Co., the Army bankers. For the first time in my life I was the proud possessor of what my father never had had to this hour—a banking account. Sums had come of various amounts from different quarters; I did not understand it in the least; it seemed to me that altogether they made of me almost a millionaire.

According to the *pater* it was essential that I should have my uniform at the earliest possible moment. The King was expected shortly to present personally the latest batch of V.C.'s and other decorations. I should have to be present dressed in my best; inside a week at the latest they ought to be in my possession. All the money wanted to pay for them was in my keeping, and more; yet, according to my father, the last thing wanted from me, in that connection, was money. I was astonished to learn that the impression of my conduct made upon the



BY THAT BOAT IS MORE THAN I CAN SAY."



"ALREADY THE CROWD IN THE STREET WAS THICK; FRESH ARRIVALS WERE APPEARING ALL THE TIME."

world at large was such that nothing would please the world at large so much as to pay for my clothes—not once, it seemed, but two or three times over. That is what it came to. There had actually been competition among various firms for the honour of doing so. My father, left to himself, with perhaps a little assistance from mother, suggested that the honour should be assigned to Messrs. Jones and Co., a famous firm of military outfitters with at least one establishment in Long Acre, and that the following day I had better see this firm—a state of affairs which, considering what the nature of my dealings with such gentlemen had been, I was scarcely prepared for. Doubting if my father knew more about such things than I did, I was anxious to have it made perfectly clear how the matter stood.

"The best thing you can do," my father said, "is to let Messrs. Jones come here and explain. Don't take my advice; act on your own judgment."

Which I did do. The next day Mr. Jones came—in a gorgeous motor-car which must have cost hundreds of pounds. He apologized for coming at all.

"I can't tell you, Lieutenant Briggs," he assured me, amid I don't know how many bows, "how conscious I am of your receiving me so soon after your return to your own country; nor how clearly I realize that at the present moment you are probably the most famous person within these shores."

I looked at him to see where the laugh came in. It was incredible that a man of his splendid appearance should be serious in speaking in such a strain to a man of mine. If I ever had a motor-car of any kind I should think the world was coming to an end.

"This is rather a nice car," he said, speaking as if his attention had been called to it by accident. "It's rather a nuisance; this makes my fourth. But in these days, when a customer expects you to send him and a half-guinea pair of trousers home together, I don't know what we are coming to. In your case, Lieutenant Briggs, it is of course a different matter. If you will consider us at your service we shall be only too glad if you will use the contents of our establishment as if they were your own. I need hardly tell you that any question of payment between us is one not to be considered. There is nothing underhand being kept in the background; you need fear no tricks of that sort with us, Lieutenant Briggs. No bill, either now or at any other time, will be rendered for goods supplied at our establishment. And to make that perfectly satisfactory a formal memorandum will be handed to you by us to that effect before business of any sort or kind is done."

"From all that I gather, what you propose to give me is a good deal."

"That is so. We propose to give you a finer outfit than you would probably buy for yourself; everything of the finest quality and a more than sufficient quantity. And we shall charge you nothing, not one farthing from beginning to end. At this moment, as I said, you are possibly the most famous man in England, and, if my judgment is to be relied upon, such you are likely to remain. All we ask of you is to be allowed to tell the world that from the sartorial point of view we turn you out—at our expense. For our own sake, as well as yours, we shall avoid anything in the shape of vulgar publicity, but we shall ask you to tell your friends that it is Jones and Co. who do you; and we shall ask you, also, to tell us if you are satisfied with the result of our labours—or otherwise. There, Lieutenant Briggs, is our proposition. It is one which, we trust, you have already undertaken to consider, or you would hardly have paid me the honour of asking me to meet you here."

The following morning at ten that car returned. I looked to see if it was disfigured by any advertisement—"Jones and Co.—Uniforms"—or something like that. But, no, there was nothing of the sort. My mother, father, Dora, and myself got in. The chauffeur was most respectful. Presently, pulling up in Long Acre, he deposited us before a most respectable-looking establishment. And it was not so easy. Already the crowd in the street was thick; fresh arrivals were appearing all the time. The reason was obvious. What was stated on all the announcements attached to the front of the building I cannot say; a few of them were enough. "Lieutenant Briggs is expected to-day. See announcement in morning papers." "The Greatest Hero in the World is coming to the Greatest Tailor!" "Messrs. Jones and Co. present their compliments to the public and trust that Lieutenant Briggs will not be overcrowded!" And so on. I dare say there were fifteen or sixteen of them. A little crude, perhaps, not saying much for our English taste of literature, but they certainly were better than I expected. And it certainly was funny to hear the people in the street reading them out aloud one to another, as if they conveyed instructions to the lookers-on. I don't know what time it was when it began to be inconveniently crowded, but it did—both in and outside the building.

On the whole, I had quite an interesting morning, and so I think did my companions. Dora, I am sure, did. And they had an excellent stock of clothes. There was nothing we wanted that they hadn't got, and they never pressed us to buy the cheaper article.

When you buy the best you buy the cheapest. Mr. Jones, the great man, who waited on me almost entirely himself, impressed this on me over and over again. It was all very well, but when you are not paying, and never will, it isn't difficult to see how true that is—he got his way with me every time.

"Is that the best?" I asked him.

"Yes," he replied. "You may rely upon that being absolutely the best."

"Then let me have it." It was handed to a deferential assistant, who joined it to a gathering pile. It did my heart good to see what a handsome pile it was by the time I was through; and it was a real comfort to feel that there was nothing—absolutely nothing!—to be paid. I felt that I really ought to offer a vote of hearfelt thanks, or do something; but directly I began to express my feelings he actually began to indulge in a series of what I should have called discourteous winks, and looked positively annoyed. When he kicked his foot against mine, and I began to ride the high horse again, his happiness returned.

To crown all we lunched with him. He gave me one of the best lunches I have eaten, and actually apologized for having resented my solitary attempt to keep him in his place. Presently he began to press his extraordinary conduct farther.

"I actually learn, Lieutenant Briggs," he went on, "that it is your intention to benefit the present generation by a timely marriage."

When I found that he meant that I was going to marry Dora practically right off I assured him he was wrong.

"I should like to"—I bowed to the lady, who blushed—"but, unlike you, Mr. Jones, I am not a millionaire." He shook his head sadly, as if he wished he were. "Perhaps after I have grown old in the service of my native land I may be able to struggle along on a pittance, but at present I should not be able even to furnish the tiniest house, so I fear, Mr. Jones, that you have been misinformed."

The result of my words took me aback; I had no idea that there was anything of that kind in the air. He laughed at my remarks as if the reason they conveyed was really too absurd, and there and then told me, before I started for home, that he proposed to do for a house what he had done for my person. He had a friend, he assured me, who had the same sort of interest in me as he had, and he had persuaded the friend, who apparently happened to be in the immediate neighbourhood, to just drop in. And he dropped—quite the gentleman, if possible finer even than Mr. Jones. There was a good deal of talk. It had occurred to him that, in a different way, he would like to do very much the same thing as his friend Mr. Jones. He should like to furnish a house—never mind the cost; let such gross considerations not trouble us! He was not only prepared to furnish a house entirely free—a good house; one of which any gentleman might be proud—but I might buy, or my good lady might buy, the furniture myself. What he would do would be to pay. He would even buy a house. We might choose the house; we might tell him the district we preferred; he would suggest to us a list of houses from which we might take at our leisure an absolutely untrammelled choice. It seemed a singular proposal, but when he repeated the proposition Jones had made one hardly knew what to say. We might, it appeared, have the tenancy of the house for a reasonable term of years, and pay absolutely no rent at all, on the mere condition that we purchased our furniture from his stock and paid him nothing—not one stiver, he assured me!

Advertisement, he told me, was what he wanted, and that, he declared, was the finest and cheapest advertisement the world could offer.

We went home at last in that beautiful motor-car to think the matter over.

The more I personally did think it over the more I saw there was something—indeed, a good deal—in it. The more I received from Mr. Jones the better the return had to be, for him, and I was quite prepared to admit, also for me.

The first great what I call function which happened to me was the presentation in state of the Victoria Cross by the King in person. Although the weather was pretty bad the presentation took place in the gardens at Buckingham Palace. Mother, Dora, and I went together in a taxi, but when we reached the palace we went different ways. Outside there were crowds and crowds, and didn't they cheer when we went in! An explanation of what each of us had got the Cross for had been sent to me on a gorgeous card enclosed with the invitation, printed large enough for anyone to read:—

"No. 986. Sergeant Samuel Briggs, 9th

Battalion, Royal British Rifles. For most conspicuous gallantry on July 9th, 1915. He crawled out repeatedly under very heavy machine-gun fire to bring in wounded men who were lying some hundred yards in front of our trenches. He rescued four men, one of whom he dragged back by placing a rifle-sling round his own neck and the man's body. This man was so severely wounded that unless he had been attended to immediately he must have died."

The King did his part of the job so quickly that you could hardly follow; there were a few of them to be done! When they heard my name there was a row; they oughtn't to do that sort of thing, but they did. When the job was finished the King walked through the grounds; the rest of the people talked—to anyone. There was a fine noise when we got outside. I was glad enough to get away—I was beginning to feel like that. You do begin to feel like that; I can't explain, but you do.

The next function was an entertainment given by my regiment. It wasn't confined to my regiment, and I wasn't the only guest, but I was very much in the front. It was to do the honours of the mess to the fellows who had risen from the ranks—and weren't there a few! Very nice things were done. Presentations were made. I had no end. I don't know why they were given me, but they were. On examining them afterwards I found that there were all sorts, principally cash, and of course, I knew what that meant. These gentlemen didn't know what they were doing. Their idea was that I was a pauper, but in one way or another I was becoming a millionaire. Funny, wasn't it?

I talked it over with Dora when I got home. She laughed.

"Sam, you'll be rich before you've done." We had a sort of a kind of count up. I was amazed to find how much coin had rolled in since I had come back from the war—from nearly every quarter. "But I never knew," she said, "that soldiering was a way to fortune."

"It depends. It's the way it's done."

"You, Sam, are to the manner born. Whenever there's anything to be got you'll get it."

I didn't like her way of putting it at all.

"Do you mean to say, Dora, that when I joined the Army I was on the make?"

"Not a bit of it! I don't mean anything the least degrading. I don't suppose you knew why you were going into the Army—except just to fight for King and Country. And that's just it. You joined for the best possible reason, and in this world I believe that is the way to get the best possible things. You're a fighting man to your finger-tips—though you mustn't mind my telling you, Sam, that sometimes I don't think you look it. But if ever there is a fight anywhere about—in your sweet, unpretentious, quiet little way, it's yours. I'm always finding out about fights you have enjoyed, and which you yourself don't seem hardly to have heard of. It's a way you've got."

Of course she would keep on exaggerating, but she was not so far out as folks might think; I don't like to live in the public eye. It didn't seem as if I could do a thing without its getting into the papers; and I don't like the papers. I tell you there were times when I felt like punching the paper's head—or the chap's who wrote for it. I don't suppose it was his fault he wrote for it; he had to earn his bread and cheese; but all the same I didn't think I should like to do it.

I wonder what the next war will be like when this is done. People talk, but before long there is going to be an end to this war, and England will come out on top. I can't exactly tell you how, but that's how it's going to be. And the man who fought from the very beginning—for King and Country—and who held up his end, and never groused or slacked, when it is over and the victory is won, is going to have one of the very best places when it comes to handing them out. You wait and see!

Look at me, at what I am and at what I was. The other day I was entertained by the regiment—think of that! And yet I'm not sure that it wasn't as much an advertising caper as anything else. And why not? Uniforms, and "civies," and furniture, and houses of a kind, and even matrimony of a sort—these things put together might bring fortune to me. But England's victory means the greatest fortune of us all. And *that* is the fact which I am straining every nerve to advertise. "Go out and fight, O ye men!" I keep on shouting that morning, noon, and night. "There is still one tip to follow, and that is England and her Glory!"

MR. LEWIS WALLER,
IN THE DUEL SCENE IN "BRIGADIER GERARD."

STAGE CELEBRITIES IN CINEMA

RELATE THEIR EXPERIENCES BEFORE THE CAMERA.

AT one time the actor and actress on the "legitimate" were inclined to regard picture-shows somewhat slightingly.

To-day, however, all that is changed. Stage celebrities have shown their appreciation and admiration of the magnificent films produced by acting themselves before the camera, while enterprising film-producers and manufacturers have not been slow to avail themselves of their services.

One of the first of the famous actresses to figure in the "movies" was Mme. Sarah Bernhardt, who acted before the camera in "Adrienne Lecouvreur" and "Queen Elizabeth," and has lately appeared in a picture production by the Trans-Atlantic Film Company, Ltd., of "Jeanne Dore," which play the great French actress was presenting at her theatre in Paris when she found it necessary to undergo amputation of one of her legs. And it was due, in a great measure, to the initiative of Mme. Bernhardt, who saw in the cinema a means of permanently recording her inimitable art, that other famous actors and actresses were led to figure prominently in cinematograph plays.

The latest recruit is Mr. Lewis Waller, whom the Walthurdaw Company, Limited, recently secured to act in a picture production of "Brigadier Gerard," by Sir A. Conan Doyle, a story which is very familiar to readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Naturally the effect of the cinema on the stage has been very widely discussed by actors and actresses, and some indication of what it means to the actor's art, what fresh interest and scope it affords him, and what possibilities for the future, may be gathered from the various experiences and expressions of opinion given in this article.

MME. SARAH BERNHARDT.

Mme. Bernhardt regards the cinema enthusiastically. "It is the wonder of the age," the French tragedienne remarked recently. "I must confess that it was the novelty of the idea which first led me to act before the camera. But since then I have become greatly impressed with the utility of moving-pictures, and although I have acted before the camera so little that I feel somewhat diffident about venturing an opinion, I really think that the cinema is a great aid to the actor's art.

"When I first acted before the camera in 'Adrienne Lecouvreur' I was afraid the film would be far from successful. The confined area in which I had to act in order to keep within the focus of the camera, the absence of audience and words, seemed so unreal that I could arouse no enthusiasm. However, I proved to be a bad judge of the effects, and was agreeably surprised at the result."

SIR HERBERT TREE.

Particularly interesting are the views of Sir Herbert Tree, who first appeared in a picture-play four and a half years ago, when he played for the films in "Henry VIII." and "King John." It is, however, as Svengali in "Trilby," produced in the picture world by the London Film Company, that Sir Herbert perhaps shows to greatest advantage on the screen.

"I think," he said, "that the cinema is creating a new appreciation, a new love of the romantic in the people. So far it has not helped the theatre, so we must hope that in time the people may be led from their attendances at picture-palaces to tolerate the drama. I can see, however, that the cinema might be of great service to the actor in recording the work of producers for future generations. It might thus become an invaluable instructor, for at a moment's notice the past-masters of the art could be projected on the screen for the benefit of the student's attention, and he could in this way learn from his models and their experience."

Referring to his own experiences and sensations when acting before the camera,

MME. SARAH BERNHARDT,
ONE OF THE FIRST OF THE FAMOUS ACTRESSES TO ACT BEFORE THE CAMERA, IN A SCENE FROM "JEANNE DORE."

SIR HERBERT TREE,
WHOSE SVENGALI IN "TRILBY" IS AS EFFECTIVE ON THE SCREEN AS IT IS ON THE STAGE.

Sir Herbert mentions the curious fact that when he played Wolsey in "Henry VIII.," and came to his downfall, he felt he must speak the words, and did actually recite them to the mute camera. "I simply couldn't help it," he said, when relating the incident. "To act without speaking was a strange experience for me, I admit. But I fell into the business quickly enough. In playing for the films, however, I found that an entirely different method is required, as different as sculpture is from painting. Looking at the pictures of myself afterwards, I thought I was quite passable—thanks to the operator."

MR. CYRIL MAUDE.

Almost identical are the views of Mr. Cyril Maude, who, during his lengthy tour with "Grumpy" in America, spent a fortnight doing cinematograph work in Ibsen's "Peer Gynt" for the Morosco Bosworth Studio.

"I think," he told us, "'movie' work is very interesting, although strenuous. An extremely clever American producer told me the other day that real actors and actresses are becoming more and more in request, and that the 'movie' actor pure and simple is beginning to be relegated to the counter from which he so lately came!

"I feel sure, however, that the moving-picture is gradually but surely educating people to want dramatic amusement, but it is also educating them to the desire to get it cheaply. The cinema will soon be in every well-to-do home. How will that affect the picture-palaces? I am convinced that the possibilities of the cinematograph are boundless, and I should like to see some of our really great producers on the stage show what they can do in picture work. Hitherto, film production has been mainly in the hands of men who have not previously distinguished themselves in theatre work."

There can be no doubt concerning the strenuousness of "movie" work, at which Mr. Maude hints, judging from a film diary which the popular actor-manager kept while in America, for the entertainment of Mrs. Maude (Miss Winifred Emery), and from which we are permitted to quote. Here are a couple of entries:—

"*Friday.*—Dressed in heavy leather trapper's clothes, I was told to get into an Indian canoe, paddle across the stream, and a man would shoot at me and splinter the paddle in my hand with a rifle-shot.

"I objected very strongly in Anglo-Saxon to do this, but on the producer explaining to me that the man shooting was a great expert, I consented to it. Jolly, wasn't it? The 'wild and woolly' with a vengeance! However, it came off all right, the paddle was

duly splintered while I was paddling, and the shot spattered the water round me. Then I had to be photographed paddling across the water with my hands, while a great fat Indian swam out to the canoe with a knife in his teeth.

"We had a bloodthirsty battle in the water, and had to sink right down out of sight; after which he had to come up again dead, while I swam rapidly ashore. But the first Indian was short of breath, and, I hear, was funky of my knife, having once before done this sort of scene and having been stabbed by his excited enemy.

"*Saturday.*—I have just had a horrid scene with a pig, on which I was sitting astride with my witch bride. The poor bride was in great fear of the pig, which was an enormously fat one, and made the most hideous row imaginable, grunting and groaning and squeaking, and kicking up no end of a fuss. I, too, was very nervous about that pig biting, or scratching at me with its back legs.

"However, here I am, back again in my dressing-room, quite safe and well.

"Taken off in a car to a picturesque place in the mountains, where I did two or three scenes with an Indian maid and her tribe. Had a terrific struggle with the Indian chief, and killed him (ye gods! what a practised murderer I have become since visiting America!).

"Had to change and do a scene in the sea among the rocks near San Pedro. Very rough and very rocky! A sham log was put into the water, and I had to cling to it. A fat cook had to come and cling to it, too. Whereupon I, in the brutal fashion prescribed by Ibsen, beat off his hands, held him up by the hair, and told him to say the Lord's Prayer. I eventually dropped him, after which the devil came up out of the water, and I had a short scene with him.

"He had a most horrible make-up.

"Made up and did an extraordinary scene in a goblins' cave, surrounded by innumerable supers dressed as witches and horrors of every kind. They offered me snakes and toads to eat, and blood to drink, but I had already had my lunch.

"Then I had to dress as young Peer Gynt and do a scene in the water, swimming about while the figure of a deer was dragged across to look as if it were swimming. Very cleverly done. Glad to get back to studio away from perils of land, water, snakes, etc. Twelve hours' work to-day. Not bad for an old 'un." (Mr. Maude is fifty-three years of age.)

Mr. ALBERT CHEVALIER.

That the cinema will never rob the spoken drama of its greatest interest and value is the view held by Mr. Albert Chevalier, who, in the film versions of "The Middleman," "The Bottle," and "My Old Dutch," has proved himself to be as incomparable an artiste

MR. ALBERT CHEVALIER,

IN "THE BOTTLE," A CINEMA PLAY BASED ON GEORGE CRUIKSHANK'S FAMOUS DRAWINGS.

before the lens as he is behind the footlights. Mr. Chevalier considers that the cinema offers a great scope, not only to the actor and actress, but also to the dramatist.

"The cinema plot is a stage play in essence," he said to us in the course of a recent interview on the subject. "Many a good cinema plot will doubtless be elaborated in the future and become a successful stage-play, because a film scenario may be said to depend solely on its construction. That is why the genuine dramatist must find his way into the studio.

"When it was first suggested to me that I should appear in cinema plays I must confess that the idea did not appeal to me. I had been told that I should have to unlearn all that my long stage experience had taught me; that it was a new art, calling for a totally different technique, etc., etc. Fortunately it is my custom to listen, to turn things over in my mind, to form my own opinion, and to act accordingly. Consequently I decided to try my luck. I received an offer from the London Film Company to play the leading part in 'The Middleman.' This offer I accepted after a long talk with that fine artist and brilliant producer, Mr. George Tucker. What happened then? At rehearsal, from the number of experienced stage-actors engaged, I might have been in a regular theatre. This rather surprised me, as I expected to be surrounded by exponents of the 'new art' only. I was curious to know what added subtlety my old friends had acquired, or developed, in order successfully to face the camera. I soon discovered that they were there, not in spite of, but *because* of their invaluable stage experience—the only difference, in practice, being one of degree. To the actor who has jumped from Drury Lane to the Court Theatre it should not be impossible to adapt his method to the limitations and conditions necessary in a cinema studio. At the first rehearsal I was naturally nervous, but realizing that Mr. Tucker had faith in me, and that a film play is simply a variant on the oldest form of dramatic art—pantomime—I soon felt as much at home as I should have been on a stage with footlights.

"I remember in my early days Sir (then Mr.) John Hare said to me one day, at a rehearsal, 'Chevalier, always let your face speak first.' I have never forgotten that advice, and it is really the secret of the art of cinema as well as stage acting."

Talking of his experiences in connection with "movie" work, Mr. Chevalier alluded to the extraordinary sensation of going into the street to act. "At first," he said, "I felt very nervous, but then I remembered that in my make-up I should not be recognized, while the scenes lasted but a few seconds.

"I had rather an embarrassing experience in connection with 'The Bottle,' the scenes of which are based on the work of George Cruiksnank, the mid-Victorian artist, and in which I play the part of a British workingman who goes through all the varying phases of the drink evil, and ends up in delirium and the prison cell.

"In one scene, as the drink-sodden sloucher, I had to smash the window of a grocer's shop, put my hand through the hole in the glass, and take a bottle from inside. Five large stones were placed outside the window, and, getting out of the car, I picked up one of the stones and threw it with all my might. It bounced off the frame.

"I picked up a second and made a hole in one of the panes. Curiously enough, the third went through the same hole, as well as the fourth, and it was not until I threw the fifth that I was able to make a hole big enough to put my hand through and bring out the bottle triumphantly. No wonder the few spectators who were gathered around, though quite accustomed to these open-air cinema rehearsals, began to laugh when I threw the fourth stone."

MR. CHARLES ROCK.

Particularly interesting, in view of his varied experiences, both in regard to stage and cinema work, are the confessions of Mr. Charles Rock, one of the most successful cinema actors in this country. With an experience of over thirty years on the stage, Mr. Rock told us that he finds his varied experience of comedy, burlesque, drama, Shakespearean, pantomime, farce, and musical-comedy acting has been of the greatest help to him as a player on the screen. "I have played," he said, "some two hundred and eighty parts on the stage, and some fifty or sixty as a cinema actor. The picture productions of 'The House of Temperley' and 'The Prisoner of Zenda' were the most interesting, perhaps, in which I have appeared. Owing to this variety of parts my face has become very mobile, and variety of expression is a great asset to a picture artiste.

"Put the brain behind the eye, and concentrate, concentrate, concentrate. By doing so the thought will automatically find expression in the eyes and upon the facial muscles. Gesture has to be perfectly natural,

and about half as rapid as in private life. For instance, suppose on the stage one heard a voice. Rapidly the head turns, and perhaps to your companion in the scene you say quickly, 'What's that?' The audience also have heard the noise, and will grasp the fact that it is disturbing to you by your hurried question. Now, on the screen the noise is unheard by the audience. You have to indicate by a look that you have heard something, a slow turn of the head, so slow that the audience can follow your movement, then again slowly you turn your head in the direction of your screen companion and, taking care to open the mouth, you speak the words, 'What's that?' And it's a certainty that the words will be read off your lips as easily as if the audience had heard them.

"It has to be remembered that the artiste is photographed about sixteen times a second, each picture about the size of a postage stamp. No retouching is possible on such a minute scale. Then the picture is magnified thousands of times when flung on the screen, and when you see it, you probably exclaim, 'Oh, is that me?' As a rule it is a truer portrait than you see in your shaving-mirror. Shakespeare said, 'Holding the *mirror* up to Nature.' If he had lived in cinema days he'd have put it, 'Holding the camera up to Nature.' That little box is capable of taking the conceit out of even a 'knut.'"

MR. GODFREY TEARLE,
IN A PICTURESQUE SCENE FROM "SIR REGINALD MORTIMER'S WAGER."

MR. GODFREY TEARLE.

Mr. Godfrey Tearle confesses that any conceit regarding himself which he may have had was completely knocked out of him when he first saw himself on the screen. "Faults in walk, gesture, and manners seemed to hurl themselves at me," he said, "as I watched myself in 'Romeo and Juliet.' I seemed to strut about like a rollicking seafaring man rather than an æsthetic gallant. It seemed to me that I was more at home in a picture-drama called 'Sir Reginald Mortimer's Wager' in which I appeared.

"But you can learn a lot from seeing yourself on the film, because, although there may be exaggerations and distortions, you can see your own weaknesses—that is, if you want to see them. Cinema work to me is very interesting, but I do not like outdoor acting, and at times one's efforts are likely to end in a rather ludicrous manner. Not long ago I went down to Westward Ho with a company to act in a drama entitled 'Saved From the Sea.' We were taken out in a boat to act a part in a shipwreck scene, and most of us were so seasick that we had to return to town without doing the scene.

"Undoubtedly the cinema is a great educational force, but it seems to me that there is no comparison between cinema acting and stage acting. And, of course, it does not necessarily follow that a good actor or actress on the stage makes a good cinema actor. I have been very disappointed in

various artistes whom I have seen on the screen, but for whose acting on the stage I have the greatest admiration."

MR. DENNIS EADIE.

It was Hepworths who produced on the film "The Man Who Stayed At Home," and thus enabled thousands who might not otherwise have done so to see Mr. Dennis Eadie in this most successful war play. Mr. Eadie, however, was disappointed when he saw himself on the screen, as he frankly admitted to us. "It was my first experience, and I do not think I shall try again, at any rate for a time. Perhaps the fault was my own, and with the passing of time my views in regard to acting for the cinema may change. But at present I am afraid that it is unsatisfactory—talking, of course, strictly from the actor's point of view. Let us leave it at that."

MR. DENNIS EADIE,
IN A FILM VERSION OF THE POPULAR PLAY, "THE MAN WHO STAYED AT HOME."

MISS SYDNEY FAIRBROTHER.

Mr. Tearle's *confrère* in "Quinneys'" at the Haymarket, Miss Sydney Fairbrother, so long associated with Fred Emmey in that funniest of sketches, "A Sister to Assist Her," has also acted for the pictures, and confessed to us that when she first saw her picture on the screen in that highly-successful Davison's Film Sales Agency's picture drama, entitled "Iron Justice," she could scarcely believe it was herself. "Surely," I said to myself, "that is not me making those deliberate and pronounced actions, forgetting that in cinema acting everything is done so broadly. There are no subtle touches in cinema acting. Whereas on the stage, for instance, you would say, with a quick indication of the hand, 'Take a chair,' in cinema acting you would move in a slow, deliberate manner, saying, 'Ta-a-a-ak-a-a-cha-cha-cha-ir,' prolonging the agony, so to speak, in order to give the operator time to record the proper effect. The operator's instructions are at first very bewildering to the stage actor, and I remember I was very amused when the man behind the camera talked to me something like this when I was acting in a certain scene:—

"'Move across to the hero; embrace him; sit down; get up; shake hands; look into his eyes; show agony; clutch your throat; faint'; and so on. It was like drilling a child, but the operator was merely indicating the time he wanted me to take according to the camera.

"I find the rehearsing is very tiring and tedious at times, while jumping backwards and forwards from one scene to another is apt to confuse you. Sometimes it is necessary to rehearse a part many times to get the proper effect. For instance, in 'Iron Justice' I tried a certain fall twenty-three times before I got it correct from the operator's point of view. I had to fall so that the picture was in perspective and the hands, feet, or head did not unduly predominate."

In answer to another question, Miss Fairbrother said that her experience was that cinema acting was in no way detrimental to stage acting. "In fact," she said, "I am inclined to think that it is beneficial, inasmuch as it revives little matters of technique which one may have forgotten."

MISS TITTELL BRUNE.

Miss Tittell Brune, the popular Australian actress, who played with Miss Fairbrother in "Iron Justice," considers that the cinema offers great opportunities. "But," she says, "to my mind, it entails greater work than acting on the ordinary stage. Cinema production is really photography in thought. On the ordinary stage there is one's audience, who, by their presence, draw out the best that is in you. And you have your words, by which you can express so much. In cinema acting, however, you have to rely entirely on your eyes and face, which must reflect your emotions. It is all facial expression and gesture. Comedy, tears, and laughter must all be shown without words, and that is why some actors and actresses, who are so splendid on the ordinary stage, find themselves handicapped and prove disappointing as cinema artistes.

"There is another point. The cinema is a permanent record of one's acting, and, remembering this, one is apt to be a little self-conscious before the camera. Sometimes on the ordinary stage, when perhaps you are not feeling so fit, mentally and physically, as you might be, and consequently are disappointed in yourself, you say, 'Well, I must do better to-morrow night.' But there is no to-morrow night on the cinema. When once pictured on the screen, you cannot improve that particular performance, and your faults stare at you each time you see the picture."

MISS LILIAN BRAITHWAITE,
WHO FIRST ACTED BEFORE THE CAMERA IN "THE WORLD'S DESIRE," IN WHICH SHE IS HERE SEEN.

MISS LILIAN BRAITHWAITE.

To Miss Lilian Braithwaite, whose first experience of cinema acting was in a drama entitled "The World's Desire," we are also indebted for some pointed remarks on the subject of cinema acting. Like other artistes who attempt this work for the first time, Miss Braithwaite was very nervous. "There is a feeling," she said, "that you are not doing much, and that everything is too short to be really interesting. A scene that would take twenty minutes on the stage only takes a couple of minutes before the camera. Again, acting in what might be compared to a very small room seems to cramp one's actions. My first feeling was one of bewilderment, until I got accustomed to the work; but, of course, the stage stands you in good stead, and gradually you readjust your ideas. It is very interesting work, and one can learn much from it. Naturally, cinema acting is all action and facial expression, and there is an embarrassing feeling at first on account of the absence of dialogue; but one soon gets over that. No, I do not think that stage experience is altogether necessary to become a good cinema actress. There are many wonderfully clever women shown on the screen who have never appeared behind the footlights, and who might possibly be failures on the legitimate stage."

What Men Live By.

By

COUNT TOLSTOY.

Translated from the Russian by Alder Anderson.

Illustrated by Thomas Somerfield.

The following, which is perhaps the finest of all Tolstoy's parable-stories, has been specially translated for "The Strand Magazine."

SIMON, the cobbler, lived in a cottage with his wife and children. His earnings were barely sufficient to support his family. He and his wife between them owned but one tattered old cloak. For many a day Simon had been hoping to get a new one, but he could never manage to put by enough money.

At last, this autumn, he had a few shillings in hand. In his wife's box were three paper roubles, besides which five roubles and twenty copecks were owing to him.

One morning he made up his mind to go to the village to buy sheepskins for a new cloak. Under his caftan he had put on his wife's wadded jacket, and after breakfast he cut himself a stout stick and set out. The three paper roubles were in his pocket. That and the five roubles owing to him would be sufficient to buy the skins.

On reaching the village his first visit was to one of his debtors. The moujik was not at home, but his wife promised faithfully that she would make her husband himself bring the money to Simon within a day or two. Meanwhile Simon had to do without it.

Another customer swore he had no money to pay what he owed, and all Simon obtained was twenty copecks for re-soling a pair of boots.

He did not lose heart.

"No doubt," he told himself, "I shall be able to buy the skins on credit."

But the dealer would not hear of such an arrangement.

"Bring me the money, and you are free to choose whatever you like. You know as well as I do how hard it is to get money that is owing."

And so Simon was not able to do any business at all. He had nothing to take back with him but the twenty copecks and a pair of old felt boots someone had given him to repair.

To forget his troubles he spent the twenty copecks on drink. Then he set his face homeward. In the morning he had felt bitterly cold; now, owing to the vodka, though he was without a cloak, a comfortable glow went all through him.

He swung along, striking the hard frozen ground with his stick, and twirling the felt boots round and round. He was in merry mood.

"I feel warm under my caftan, just because I have had something to drink. What do I want a new cloak for? I have even forgotten my poverty. That's the sort of man I am. Why should I care? I could very easily go through life without a new cloak. The only thing that bothers me is that my wife will be so put out. When I reach home I shall find all the bread eaten up. That means another half-rouble gone."

By this time the cobbler had reached the chapel at the bend in the road. Behind the chapel he saw something white. In the waning daylight he could not quite make out what it was.

"Whatever can it be? There was no white stone there. Is it a cow? No; it does not look like a cow. Judging by the head, one would almost say it was a man. But why should a man be there at all?"

As Simon drew nearer he was able to see the object more distinctly. Wonder of wonders! It really was a man. Was he dead or alive? Propped up against the chapel wall, he was sitting naked and motionless. The cobbler was greatly disturbed.

"Evidently this is someone who has been killed and robbed and then abandoned here. If I go any nearer I may never hear the end of this business."

It would be much better, he decided, to pass on, as if he had noticed nothing. When

"AS SIMON DREW NEARER HE WAS ABLE TO SEE THE OBJECT MORE DISTINCTLY. WONDER OF WONDERS! IT REALLY WAS A MAN."

he had gone round the chapel he no longer saw the man. But curiosity prompted him to look back. The man had moved slightly from the wall, and was staring straight at Simon.

More alarmed than ever, the cobbler made the sign of the cross, and wondered what he ought to do—retrace his steps or run away.

"If I go back," he argued, "I may get into Heaven knows what trouble. Who can tell what this man is? His presence here is very suspicious. Perhaps he may spring at my throat, and I may not be able to escape from him. Besides, what can you do for a naked man? I can't take off my own clothes to give him the only garment I myself possess. May Heaven preserve me!"

He hastened his steps, then suddenly he stopped.

"What is the meaning of this, Simon? What are you doing? Here is a man in trouble—perhaps dying—yet you only think of yourself, and are running away. Have you become a rich man? Do you dread losing your possessions? It isn't right, Simon; it isn't right!"

So Simon turned back and walked straight to the man.

When he was quite close he examined him. The man was young and strong. There were no traces of violence, no bruises on the body, but he was shivering with cold and frightened and dazed. He did not even glance at Simon, but remained with his back leaning against the wall. He seemed too weak even to raise his eyelids.

Simon bent over him.

Suddenly the man appeared to revive. He opened his eyes, turned his head, and looked at Simon.

No sooner had Simon met his eyes than he felt a flow of love for the man. He put down the boots he was carrying, loosened his waistband, and took off his caftan.

"Come," he said, "don't let us make any unnecessary fuss about it. Put on these things quickly."

He raised the unfortunate man in his arms, set him on his feet, and gazed at his body, his delicate white skin, and his kind face. He helped him on with the caftan, for the man was too weak to get his arms through the sleeves without assistance. Simon had even to fasten it. Then he took off his ragged cap, thinking to offer it to the stranger.

"No," he decided. "He does not require it, with that thick, curly hair."

And he replaced the cap on his head.

"But I had better make him put on these boots."

He knelt before the man and put them on himself. Then he made him stand up again.

"Well, brother, there you are. Move about a little to warm your blood. Let us be getting along now."

The unknown man stood still and said nothing. He looked at Simon kindly, but he seemed unable to speak.

"Well, have you no voice? We can't pass the winter here, you know. It's time to go home. Here, take my stick. You can lean upon it if you feel very weak. Let us start. Come, now."

At last the man moved and followed Simon.

"Where do you come from?" the cobbler asked.

"Not from this neighbourhood."

"I could have said as much. I know everybody about here. How did you come to be lying behind the chapel?"

"That I am unable to tell you."

"Had anyone hurt you?"

"No; it was God who punished me."

"Yes, yes. We know that God is the source of everything. Still, you must have come from somewhere. Tell me, at least, where you were going."

"Anywhere. The place is indifferent to me."

This answer startled Simon.

"The man has not the face of a cheat," he reflected. "He has a pleasant voice. But why will he tell me nothing about himself?"

Then Simon recollected that, after all, there was much that was disconcerting in life.

"Very well," he said to the man, "you shall come home with me. There at least you will be able to warm yourself."

They walked on side by side. A cutting wind had risen and penetrated through Simon's shirt. The effect of the liquor had now worn off, and he felt half-frozen. He quickened his pace, blowing and puffing. "That's me all over," he told himself. "I leave home to buy a winter coat and I return without my caftan and bring a naked man home with me. Matriena won't exactly be pleased, I'm afraid."

The thought of his wife made Simon distinctly unhappy. But when he looked at the man he recalled the moment when their eyes had met behind the chapel, and his heart seemed to beat lighter.

Simon's wife finished her housework early. She had chopped up the firewood, drawn the water, fed the children, and had her own breakfast. Then she considered whether she should bake to-day or not. There was

still quite a large piece of the loaf in the cupboard. If Simon had dined in the village, he would not require much supper, and there would be sufficient bread left over for to-morrow. She examined the bread again. "No," she decided, "I shall not bake to-day. Besides, there's no flour. We shall be able to manage, I think, until Friday."

Putting the bread away again, Matriena was soon busy mending one of her husband's shirts. And as she sewed, she wondered how Simon had got on with his purchase of the sheepskins.

"Heaven grant he's not cheated! He's such a simpleton. He could never deceive anybody himself, yet a child can take him in. Eight roubles! That's a tidy bit of money. You ought to be able to get a good winter cloak for eight roubles. Not the very best cloak, perhaps, but a good cloak all the same. It was hard enough to get through last winter without a cloak. Simon's even gone off with my quilted jacket. How does he imagine I can go outside the door, half undressed! What a time he's been, to be sure!"

At that moment she heard Simon's footsteps. Throwing her work aside, she went to the door. Two men were outside, Simon and another peasant, bareheaded and in felt boots.

Matriena knew at once that her man had been drinking.

"I guessed as much," she muttered.

But when she realized that not only was Simon without his caftan, but that he had returned empty-handed, the poor woman's heart fell.

"He has spent his money with some vagabond he has picked up, and he has actually dared to bring him home with him."

She motioned to the two men to enter and followed them in silence. She examined the pale, emaciated stranger, who, she now saw, not only had no cap on, but had no shirt under the caftan.

He was standing motionless, his eyes fixed on the ground.

"Some bad lot, no doubt," Matriena concluded. "No wonder he looks frightened."

She turned away to the stove, sulky and cross, to wait for whatever might happen next.

Simon removed his cap and, like a schoolboy taken in fault, sank dejectedly upon the bench.

"Well, Matriena," he said at last, "when are you going to give us some supper? I'm starving!"

His wife muttered something unintelligible. Then, without moving, she glanced from one man to the other significantly.

Simon knew very well that she was furious. But what was he to do? With apparent unconcern, he took the stranger's hand.

"Sit down, brother, and have some supper."

The other complied silently.

"Well, wife! Have you cooked nothing to-night?"

Then the storm broke!

"Yes, I have, but not for you. You have drunk away even your common sense. Look at him!" she cried. "He sets out to buy a cloak and he comes back without his caftan and brings a naked vagabond with him into the bargain. No, no, my fine fellow, there's no supper here for drunkards."

"Enough, Matriena! If you have nothing better to say, hold your tongue. Why don't you rather ask me who this man is?"

"Tell me first where you lost the money," she insisted.

Simon drew the three paper roubles from his pocket.

"Here's your money. Troponoff did not pay me. I'm to have the money to-morrow."

This made Matriena more furious than ever. There was no cloak, their only caftan had been given away to this stray creature, and Simon had not brought back the money owing to them.

She picked up the three roubles and locked them up, grumbling all the time.

"There's no supper for you. If you imagine I'm going to feed every drunkard you choose to bring home, you are very much mistaken. An honest man would at least have a shirt on his back. If you hadn't done something you were ashamed of, you would have told me at once where you found this creature."

"What have I been doing all this time but trying to tell you? I was passing the chapel, when I saw the poor fellow lying naked and half-frozen. It was God who led me to him; he would have been dead before morning. What was I to do? I took him with me. I gave him something to put on and brought him straight home with me. Calm yourself, Matriena; it is a sin to lose one's temper. Remember, we must all die one day."

She opened her mouth to speak, but the words froze on her lips.

Her eyes had fallen on the stranger, who still remained in the same attitude. His clasped hands lay on his knees, his head was bent.

Matriena remained silent.

In very gentle tones, Simon addressed her :—

"Matriena, does God no longer dwell in your heart?"

Still she did not answer, but looked towards the stranger, who raised his eyes to hers. At once her heart seemed to melt.

She came back into the room without a word, went to the stove, and busied herself with the supper. When everything was ready, she placed the dish on the table with the remainder of the loaf and a jug of *kvass*.

"Come," she said, "eat!"

Simon pushed the stranger towards the table.

"Approach, young man."

He cut the bread into slices, dipped some of them into the dish, and pushed it nearer to his guest.

Matriena sat down at the end of the table. Leaning on her elbows, and supporting her chin in her hands, she fixed her eyes on the stranger. An intense feeling of pity for him had taken possession of her, a strange tenderness was creeping into her heart for this unfortunate creature. Curiously enough, he at once grew more cheerful. He raised his head, and answered the woman's look with a smile.

She got up, opened a chest, and took out the shirt she had been mending, as well as an old pair of trousers, and handed them to the stranger. She spoke very gently.

"Take these. I see you haven't even got a shirt. Put these things on, then lie down to rest where you like, either on the bench or on the stove."

The stranger did as he was bid; then he stretched himself out on the bench.

Matriena blew out the candle, picked up the discarded caftan, and climbed on to the stove beside Simon. She covered herself up with the caftan, but she was unable to sleep. She could not get the stranger out of her mind. She was also disturbed by the fact that all the bread had been eaten; there would be none for to-morrow. Also, she remembered that she had given away Simon's shirt and trousers. Her uneasiness grew, and then, suddenly, she seemed to see again the stranger's smile, and, once more, she became unaccountably happy.

Next morning, when Simon awoke, his wife had already gone out to borrow bread from her neighbour. The children were still asleep, and the stranger was sitting alone on the bench. Though his eyes wore the same pensive look, the expression of his face, on the whole, was more serene.

"Well, my good fellow," said Simon, "the stomach requires food and the body clothes. Every man has to depend on himself. What can you do?"

"Nothing."

"Eh?" Simon's eyes opened very wide. "A man can do anything," he continued, "if only he's willing."

"Since everybody works, I will do as others do."

"What's your name?"

"Michel."

"Well, Michel, you won't say anything about yourself; that's your business. Still, you must live, and if you do as I tell you, I'll look after you."

"May Heaven preserve you! Teach me—show me what I must do."

Simon picked up several untwisted threads and began to work them to a point.

"See that? It's quite easy, isn't it?"

Michel watched the operation intently. Then he in turn twisted some threads.

After that Simon showed him how to shape and cut the leather, how to use the awl, fix a sole on a boot, and prepare the stitches.

Two days later, no matter what work was shown to him, Michel understood immediately. He worked so fast that anyone would have supposed he had been making boots all his life. He never wasted a moment, and ate very sparingly. When he laid aside his work he remained quietly in his corner, his eyes fixed on the ceiling. He rarely spoke, never laughed, and never went out. Once only he had been seen to smile—the first night, when Simon's wife had given him supper.

Thus a year went by. Michel continued to live with Simon and to work for him. The journeyman was getting quite renowned. No one had ever made boots so neat and so strong. His fame spread for twenty leagues round, and Simon was almost growing rich.

One day, in winter, master and man were industriously stitching away, when a carriage drawn by three fine horses pulled up outside the hut amid a great jingle of bells. A footman jumped down and opened the carriage door.

A gentleman stepped out. He was wrapped up in a rich fur coat. Without hesitation he mounted the three steps that led to the little porch.

Matriena opened the door very wide.

The gentleman bent his head and entered. When he straightened himself again, it almost seemed as if his head reached the ceiling

and his portly person filled all the available space around him.

Simon, greatly bewildered, bowed low. He had never seen quite such a man before. He himself was rather short and stumpy, Michel was very thin, and Matriena resembled a dried faggot. This man was so different, he might have come from another planet. His face was ruddy and round, and his bull neck somehow suggested that he was made out of bronze.

Breathing loudly, he threw off his coat and sank down heavily upon the bench.

"Which of you two is the master cobbler?"

Simon stepped forward.

"I am, your honour."

The gentleman shouted to his servant:—

"Fedka, bring the leather in here."

The man entered and placed a parcel on the table.

"Untie it."

"You see that leather?" continued the gentleman to Simon, pointing to the contents of the parcel.

"Yes, your honour."

"Well, what kind of leather do you think this is?"

Simon fingered it professionally.

"It's first-class goods, your honour."

"You are right, idiot. It is good leather, better leather than you have ever seen before. That piece of leather is worth twenty roubles."

"SIMON, GREATLY BEWILDERED, BOWED LOW. HE HAD NEVER SEEN QUITE SUCH A MAN BEFORE."

"When would the like of us ever have a chance of seeing such leather?" said Simon, thoroughly abashed.

"Quite so, quite so. Do you think you can make me a pair of boots out of it?"

"Certainly, your honour."

"Ah, you are certain, are you? Now, look here, I want you to understand for whom you are working and with what leather. You must give me a pair of boots that will last a year, boots that I can wear for a whole year without anything going wrong with them. Do you follow me? If you think you can do this, take the leather and cut it up; if not, you had better say so. I tell you now, in advance, that if the boots you make give way before the end of the year, I shall have you locked up. If they last the year out, I shall pay you ten roubles."

Simon, whom this long speech had frightened out of his wits, was at a loss what to answer. He looked at Michel, nudged him with his elbow, consulting him as clearly as he could without words whether he should accept the proposal or not.

Michel nodded, meaning "Yes," and Simon told the gentleman that he undertook to do what was required—namely, deliver a pair of boots that would neither lose their shape nor wear out within a year.

The gentleman called his servant and held out his foot.

"Take my measure," he said, shortly.

The foot was so big that Simon found it necessary to cut the measurements into a second sheet of paper, though the one he had first chosen was unusually large. He took the outline of the foot, then the instep; then he proceeded to measure the gentleman's sankle, which was more like a beam than a man's leg.

During this process the gentleman stared hard at the others.

"Who's that?" he asked Simon, pointing to Michel.

"That's my journeyman. He will make your boots, your honour."

"Remember, now, I said a year. They must last me for a whole year!" said the gentleman to Michel.

Simon noticed that Michel was not even looking at their forbidding guest. His gaze seemed to be riveted above the latter's head, as if he saw something there.

Michel stared for some time in this strange manner, then he suddenly smiled.

"What are you laughing at, you fool?" asked the gentleman, angrily. "You ought to be thinking already how you will manage to finish my boots in time."

"Your boots shall be ready by the time they have been promised," answered Michel, quietly.

The gentleman was getting into his coat again. "Yes," he said, "I mean to see that they are."

He turned to the door, but this time omitted to bend his head, with the consequence that he bumped his forehead violently against a beam. He swore furiously, and was still rubbing his forehead as he entered his carriage.

"Something like a man, that," said Simon, as soon as the visitor had disappeared. "As hard as flint! He very nearly broke that beam, and yet he's already got over it."

"Leading the life he does," put in Matriena, "how can he fail to be a fine man? Even death won't find it an easy job to tackle him. He seems made out of iron."

"Well, Michel, we have taken this order and we don't want to get into any trouble about it. That leather is very expensive, and the gentleman is very violent. There must be no mistake. Your eyes are better than mine and your hands more skilful. Here are his measurements. You'd better cut the leather at once. I'll get on with my work."

Michel set to his task. He unrolled the leather and proceeded to cut it. Matriena watched him. She knew all about shoemaking, and she was not a little startled to observe that Michel did not cut the leather in the usual way for making boots. She was on the point of making a remark, but refrained and came to the conclusion that she had probably misunderstood what kind of boots the gentleman wanted exactly.

"Michel knows better than I what to do," she assured herself. "I won't interfere."

Meanwhile, Michel was making shoes, or rather sandals.

When the dinner-hour came, Simon left his seat, and then he also saw that instead of making boots Michel had made sandals—Michel, who had never before made the slightest mistake. He could not restrain himself.

"The leather is spoilt! What shall I say to the gentleman? Never shall I be able to match such leather anywhere. What possessed you, my friend? You have ruined me! It was boots the gentleman ordered, not sandals."

A loud knock interrupted him. Through the window they all saw the gentleman's servant, tying his horse to the ring at the door.

Simon hastened to admit him. The man was almost breathless.

"Good evening, master!"

"Good evening! What is it?"

"The lady has sent me about the boots."

"The boots—what boots?"

"The gentleman won't require those boots now. He'll never wear boots again."

"What are you talking about?"

"My master died in his carriage before reaching home. When we arrived I got down to open the carriage door, and there he was lying in the corner quite stiff. We could hardly get him out. The lady sent me here at once."

"'Go to the cobbler,' she says, 'and tell him he is to make burying-sandals, instead of the boots the gentleman ordered. Tell him to hurry. You had better wait until they are done and bring them back with you.'"

Michel took the sandals he had just completed and the leather that remained over. He wrapped both up in a neat parcel, and put it into the servant's hands.

"Good-bye, all! And good luck to you," said the man, as he left the hut.

Six years had now elapsed since Michel had come to live with Simon. Things continued as usual. He never went out, very seldom opened his lips, and had been seen to smile only twice, once when Matriena gave him supper, again when the gentleman called and ordered boots.

Simon could not find words adequate to express what he thought of his journeyman. It never occurred to him now to ask where the stranger came from. His one and only dread was that Michel might leave him.

They were all together in the hut one day. The children were playing and climbing upon the window ledges; Matriena was heating her irons; Simon was busy with his awl, and Michel was putting the finishing touches to a heel, near the window, when one of the children leaned over his shoulder.

"Look, Uncle Michel! Look at that woman with the two little girls. I'm sure they're coming here. One of the little girls is lame."

Michel dropped his work and stared through the window, much to Simon's bewilderment. Here was Michel, who never even glanced outside, with his face glued to the pane. Simon looked out himself to see what was happening. A decently-dressed woman was approaching with two little children. Each child wore a winter coat and a woollen shawl on the head. Both little girls were so alike that, were one of them not very lame, it would have been impossible to distinguish one from the other.

The woman had reached the door. She raised the latch and entered, pushing the children in front of her.

"Good day, my masters."

"You are welcome! What is it you require?"

The woman sat down, while the two little girls pressed timidly against her knees.

"I want shoes for my little ones."

"We have never made any quite so small before, but we are always willing to do our best. Would you like them welted and linen-lined? Michel, my assistant here, is wonderfully clever."

Turning round, Simon noticed that Michel was staring hard at the two children. Simon grew more and more surprised. The children, it is true, were winsome, plump little maidens, rosy-cheeked and black-eyed, and their cloaks and shawls were becoming enough; but, even so, it was difficult to understand Michel's interest in them. It looked almost as if he knew them. While he was taking their measure, Simon kept up a conversation with the woman. She had now lifted the lame little girl on to her knees.

"You need only take two measures," she said; "make one shoe to fit the lame foot and three to fit the other. Their feet are exactly the same. They are twins."

Simon asked:—

"Why is she lame? Was she born lame?"

"No, her mother made her like that."

Matriena's curiosity was aroused.

"Are these little ones not yours, then?" she asked. "Are you not their mother?"

"Neither mother, nor even a relation, my good woman. They are my adopted children."

"Do you mean to say they are not related to you at all, and yet you look after them as you do?"

"How could I fail to cherish them? I nursed them both. I had a boy of my own whom God took away, but even him I did not love more than I do these little ones."

"Whose children are they, then?"

Matriena entered upon a long conversation with the woman, and this is the story she heard:—

"Six years ago it is now since they became orphans. The father was buried on a Tuesday, and the mother the following Friday. They had lost their father before they were born, and their mother did not survive their birth a day. I and my husband lived next door

to them. The father had gone alone into the forest, and a tree fell upon him. He was so much injured that soon after his return home he breathed his last. Two days later, the mother bore these little ones. There was nobody to assist her, neither nurse nor servant. I looked in early the next morning, and there the poor thing lay, quite numb already. She had turned over on one of the babies and crushed its foot. What was to be done with the two infants, who were quite alone in the world? At the time, I was the only woman in the village who could nurse them, my baby having been born eight months before. So it was arranged that, meanwhile, I should take charge of them.

"I carried them home and fed one of them, but the poor little lame mite I left alone. I felt sure she would not live. But she moaned so piteously, that it almost broke my heart and I began to reproach myself. Was I to let the little angel suffer from hunger? I could not. And so I had three babies to feed—my own, and the two others. Fortunately I was young and strong, and, with the help of Heaven, I was able to bring up all three. Then, two years later, God took my boy away, and He has given me no other children. And that is how I have come to love and cherish them. They are the apple of my eye."

Simon was accompanying the woman to the door. Now they both turned round and looked at Michel. He was sitting, his hands clasped on his knees, an expression of ecstasy in his eyes, and a smile on his lips.

Simon went up to him.

"What's the matter, Michel?"

The workman rose from his seat, tidied the litter round him, put away his tools, and took off his apron. Then he bowed to the cobbler and his wife.

"God has forgiven me, master! Do you forgive me too?"

As he spoke, a dazzling light seemed to issue from his body.

Speechless and awed, Simon bowed also. Then he said:—

"I see, Michel, that you are not a man like the rest of us, and that I may neither look at you, nor ask you questions. Tell me one thing only. Why were you so scared and so gloomy the night I found you and brought you home with me? And why did you at once brighten up, when my wife offered you food? You smiled then. Some months later, when the gentleman ordered boots, you smiled again and looked happier still; and to-day, when the woman brought the two little girls in here, you smiled for the third time and you have grown radiant. Tell me, Michel, why does a dazzling light come from your body, and why did you smile those three times?"

" TURNING ROUND, SIMON NOTICED THAT MICHEL WAS STARING HARD AT THE TWO CHILDREN."

and what are these three words? Tell me, so that I too may learn them."

" God punished me for my disobedience. I was an Angel in Heaven and I disobeyed Him. The Lord had sent me to fetch a soul, the soul of a woman. When I descended to earth I saw the woman lying ill; she had just given birth to two little girls. The infants were crying by their mother's side, and she was too weak to take them to her bosom. When she saw me, she understood that God had sent for her soul and she implored me to spare her.

" 'Angel of God,' she said, 'three days ago a tree fell on my husband and killed him. I have neither brother nor sister, nor kith nor kin of any kind. These little orphans have no one but me. Do not take my poor soul away! Let me bring up my children, until they are able to stand alone. Children cannot live without father or mother.'

" I did what the woman implored me to do. One of the babies I laid near her breast, the other I put into her arms, and I returned to Heaven. I stood before God and I said:—

" 'I could not bring away the woman's soul. Her husband is dead and she has twin children. She entreated me to give her time to bring up her little ones.'

" And the Lord replied:—

" 'Return at once, and bring back the woman's soul. Some day you will know the meaning of three Divine words. You will learn—what there is in men; what is not given to man; and what men live by. After you have learnt these three words, you will return to Heaven.'

" Once more I descended to earth, and this time I carried away the soul of the poor mother. The babies dropped from her arms, and the woman, as she was about to leave earth, turned on her left side and crushed the foot of one of the little girls. I was rising

" I am overjoyed, because God has pardoned me; I smiled three times because it was necessary I should learn three Divine words. I have at last learnt them. The first word I learned when your wife took pity on me; I smiled then for the first time. The second word I learned when the rich man ordered boots, and I smiled for the second time. Just now, when I saw the two little girls, I learned the third and last word, and I smiled for the third time."

" But why did God punish you, Michel,

above the village with my burden, when I was caught in a whirlwind, and my wings fell away from me. The woman's soul ascended to God alone, and I was left on the ground near the wayside."

Simon and Matriena now knew whom they had clothed and fed, to whom they had given shelter. They wept with joy.

Meanwhile the angel continued :—

"I lay by the wayside, naked and alone. Until then I had known nothing of human miseries. Hunger and cold were strange to me. But now I had become a man. I was hungry, I was cold, and I knew not what would become of me. I saw a chapel consecrated to the Eternal, and there, I thought, I could find a refuge. The door was securely padlocked. I could not obtain admission. I sat down on the threshold, trying to shelter myself from the cold blast. Suddenly I heard footsteps on the road. A man was approaching, swinging a pair of boots. He was speaking to himself. For the first time, since I had become a man myself, I looked upon the mortal face of another man, and the sight terrified me. I could easily hear what he was saying.

"'How am I to feed my wife and children? How am I to get a warm cloak to protect my frozen limbs from the cold through the coming winter?'

"The man caught sight of me. He knitted his brows, looked very fierce, and continued his way. I was in despair. Then suddenly he retraced his steps. I looked at him and hardly recognized him. His face, on which had been the seal of death, was now glowing with life, and in it I could clearly see the reflection of God's visage. The man came up to me; he clothed me, he took me by the hand, he brought me to his house. His wife came out to us on the doorstep; she spoke to us, and the woman was even more terrible to look at than the man when I first saw him. I could hardly stand on my feet, yet she would have sent me forth again into the cold night, to die from hunger and exposure. I knew that, in driving me away, she was decreeing her own death. Suddenly her husband spoke to her of God. Immediately the woman became transformed. She gave me food, and as she did so our eyes met. She was no longer the same woman; in her face I now recognized God's image. Instantly I recalled God's words: 'You will learn what there is in man.' Thus it was I found out that what dwells in men is love.

"In my joy at having one of the Divine words revealed to me, I smiled for the first time. But I was not to learn everything at once. I still had to grasp the meaning of the other two words—*that which is not given to man*, and *what men live by*."

"One day, after I had stayed with you for a year, the rich man ordered you to make a pair of boots which, he said, were to last him for at least a year, and remain in perfect condition. I looked at him. Standing quite close to him, I could see one of my former companions, the Angel of Death. He was invisible to all eyes save mine. Well, I knew that the sun would not set again before the rich man's soul had left his body. And I thought to myself :—

"'Here is a man making provision for a year in advance, utterly unconscious that before nightfall he will be dead.'

"And I fathomed God's second word. *You will learn what is not given to man.* It is not given to man to know what his body needs.

"And for the second time I smiled.

"But I was still ignorant of the meaning of the third word, *What men live by*. And so days followed days, while I awaited the Creator's revelation of His last Divine word.

"Finally, in the sixth year, the woman came with the twins. I knew them at once, and, when I heard how they had survived, it dawned upon me that at last I had nothing more to learn.

"When the mother had implored me for her children's sake, I had granted her prayer, though with my downfall I believed these orphans were destined to perish too. Yet, behold! a woman, an utter stranger to them, had taken them in, had nursed them and looked after them, as though they were her own flesh and blood. In her face also I saw God's Divine image reflected, and I grasped the sense of the word, *What men live by*.

"And now I knew that God had granted me his full pardon.

"Then for the third time I smiled."

And with that the angel threw off his terrestrial garments and appeared clad in radiance, that human eyes could not support.

Raising his voice, the sound of which seemed to come from Heaven, he said :—

"It is fully revealed to me that man lives not by taking care for himself, but by *Love*."

Thereupon the angel began to chant the praises of God, and the house quivered with the sound of his voice. Suddenly the roof opened, and from earth to Heaven there sprang up a column of fire. Simon, his wife, and his children fell prostrate on the floor.

When Simon awoke, the hut was precisely as it had always been, and he was alone with his wife and children.

"THEREUPON THE ANGEL BEGAN TO CHANT THE PRAISES OF GOD, AND THE HOUSE QUIVERED WITH THE SOUND OF HIS VOICE."

The Glastonbury Scandal.

By E. NESBIT.

Illustrated by Stanley Davis.

THERE were, strictly speaking, two scandals besides the other one. One of them, of course, was the marriage; but marriage is a scandal which, with patience and courage, can be lived down. Not but what it was a biggish scandal, complicated, too, by the breaking, on the part of the bridegroom, of the most, or almost the most, sacred ties. Everyone knows that a marriage had been arranged between Miss Gertrude Vandewinckes, daughter of Mr. P. Q. Vandewinckes, of Paris and Chicago, and Lord Glastonbury. One wonders by whom such marriages are arranged. Sometimes, doubtless, by the bride. Occasionally, perhaps, by the bridegroom. Usually, one infers, by some third person. The third person in the case we are considering was old Lady Glastonbury; everyone knew that. (You have probably had her pointed out to you at the opera. Her diamonds are enough to take your breath away as they retreat and reappear among the wrinkles of her thin neck. The complexion with which the bony structure of her face is overlaid is a marvel of art. And her chestnut curls have almost the sheen of live hair. She looks like Lord Glastonbury's grandmother, but really he is her son. She married rather late in life.)

The marriage scandal occurred when Lord Glastonbury was on his way home from Chicago — his first visit to the home of his betrothed. Some perverse impulse prompted

him to leave the ship at Plymouth. And he came to London by easy stages through the green and gold and silver of an English spring. The New Forest beckoned alluringly to eyes sated with dust and pork and the spectacle of American millionaires. He got out at Winchester and went back into the Forest's green heart. The Spring, Destiny, Coincidence, suddenly took hands. At the Brockenhurst Hotel he ran across a man who had been his fag at Eton. The man took him home. The home was a park and a mansion embowered in the free forest. The mansion had a garden, and the garden had, two days after Lord Glastonbury's arrival, a garden-party. "The annual thing, you know," the friend explained. "Everybody asked. Beautiful feeling. No class distinctions. Even the grub. Cream ices—real cream. One quality for everybody."

It was early June. The sky was blue and white, the close green turf dotted with agreeable people, English people. Lord Glastonbury looked at the crowd, loving it. And then out of the crowd one face came to him as one face comes sometimes from among the crowded faces that move about just as you are going to sleep; one face, so real that the surprise of its reality wakes you up, and you lose the vision. It was a girl's face, framed in soft bright hair under a shady hat. Her gloves were neat but mended, her shoes were small, but not garden-party shoes. She had a white dress, shabby but fresh, with new blue ribbons, like the heroine of a romance. And to Lord Glastonbury she was just simply and inevitably that. To her it must have seemed that he descended from the Olympus of the unmistakably Upper Classes, a condescending Jove, enveloping a confiding

Semele in a cloud of flattering condescension. At first, that is. Afterwards——

The park was large, its glades well wooded. One does not quite see how he managed it. But it is certain that he was never introduced to her; that they spent the whole afternoon together; that he met her the next day, kissed her the day after that, and, a week later, married her. As for the marriage which had "been arranged," the details of its disarrangement do not present themselves. There must, however, have been "scenes."

Lord Glastonbury and his wife went abroad at once and stayed there. The unkindest things were said. At the end of a year they came home. The young Lady Glastonbury was presented to her Sovereign and to Society. The Sovereign admired her and Society received her very cordially.

It had leaked out, as these secret horrors will, that her father was a farmer; not just a rich man who keeps a farm to spend money on, as other men keep less respectable objects, but a working farmer.

"It's quite true," old Lady Glastonbury had to own to a sympathizing friend who was also a cousin and "companion." "The only comfort I have is that those sort of people never have any morals. So it may be possible to get rid of her. If only it could be done while dear Gertrude's still heart-broken."

"You think she would?" the friend asked.

"Like a shot," said the mother-in-law; "if he could get free soon enough."

"Well," said the friend, "I'm sure I hope it will all turn out for the best. I'm sure if anyone could manage it——"

"What's that?" said Lady Glastonbury, sharply.

"I only said if ever anyone deserved anything less, it's you," the friend stumbled in her haste.

"Well," said Lady Glastonbury, "we shall see. They come home to-night."

They came. "Foxy," was the dowager's verdict on the pale, pointed little face, the hazel eyes, the full-gold hair. "And a lanky may-pole," she added, smiling amiably at her five foot eight of graceful daughter-in-law.

"Of course," she was saying, "dear Claude's choice is welcome to me. He ought to have known that. So long as he is happy."

"Thank you," said the new daughter-in-law. "I think he is."

The elder lady kissed the younger again. In such few and simple words are wars declared.

"You *are* happy, Claude, aren't you?" the bride of a year asked her husband that night when they were alone. And he answered in a lover's *cliché* which was also a statement of fact, "I never knew what happiness meant before—hadn't the slightest idea."

"No more had I," said Lavender, and the two melted into a group that would have charmed a sculptor.

Next day there was a little talk about the family jewels. It ended in old Lady Glastonbury's sending them to Lavender with a sugared note.

Lavender herself was feeling a little breathless. The honeymoon was over, and she was plunged suddenly into a restless, resistless tide of social obligations, with no experience to guide her, and no ambitions to inspire; her only guide and incentive, a passionate wish to please *him*. Her husband helped; her mother-in-law helped. Old Susie might not have grieved to see her daughter-in-law divorced, but she had no desire to see her ridiculous. Lavender was a quick learner. Before she had been married two years she could have passed an examination in "the way the rich live." She had learned to control her housekeeper, and no longer felt those earlier tremors of the soul in her butler's presence. She learned to do everything that is "done," and to eschew all such things as are "not done." She played her part perfectly.

"Really," said old Susie to Amelia, the cousin, "to look at her no one would guess. And most providentially her father died—neck broken, you remember—fancy a person in that position *hunting!*—and there are no other relations. If it wasn't for Gertrude-—"

"Gertrude's married by now, I suppose?"

"The odd thing is that she *isn't*. She was over last spring. They met. It was like a play. So sweet to each other—the women, I mean—Lavender a little too sticky, perhaps. Oh! very pretty. It made me sick! And Gertrude with her four million dollars. And she's not so very plain, is she?—now she does her hair the new way."

"Some people think your daughter-in-law a beauty, don't they?"

"Oh, you mean all those men who hang about her. I don't know. She's a little bit different from our sort of girls. I expect they think—— Anyway, they do hang about. But so they do with barmaids. Claude doesn't seem to mind. I spoke to him about it the other day. 'She's too

"'OF COURSE,' SHE WAS SAYING, 'DEAR CLAUDE'S CHOICE IS WELCOME TO ME.'"

cordial,' I said; 'there'll be a scandal presently.' Well, he can't say I haven't warned him."

"But if she's cordial to everyone?"

"That's just her craftiness," said old Susie. "You mark my words, Amelia, I shall find her out before long. She's growing paler and thinner. She's got something on her mind. Oh, I don't despair of seeing him free yet."

"But surely," even Amelia had to say it, "you don't want the girl to do anything wrong?"

"Heaven forbid!" said the Dowager Countess of Glastonbury; "but if she does do anything—not quite; I don't want it to be for nothing."

That same evening Lord Glastonbury, in his turn, remarked the pallor of his wife's little, pointed face.

"What have you been doing to yourself?" he said. "You look like a little white rose. Tired?"

"Not very," said she.

"Take a day off," he said.

"A day—would you come? Into the country? To-morrow?" She spoke eagerly.

"Can't be done, my child," he said. "I've more engagements than I can get through, as it is. But you might take a day's rest-cure. Lie in bed all day, you know. You'd be as fresh as paint for the Widcroft-Lawson's dinner, and there's a dance somewhere afterwards, isn't there? I do like you in that dress," and he touched her soft, shining gown.

"Sure to be. Do you? I'm glad. Claude," she went on, fingering the pink pearls nervously, "I suppose we can't leave London till July? I—the country must be lovely now."

"Of course we can't," he told her.

"'YOU LOOK LIKE A LITTLE WHITE ROSE.'"

"You'll have all August and September at Glastonbury. We can't possibly run away in the middle of the season. People would think we were mad."

"I suppose they would," she said, with a sigh, and he kissed her and told her not to be a dear little duffer.

It was after this that the change came into their lives. Hitherto, her every moment had been at his service, and at the service of that new life which was to him the only natural life for intelligent human beings. Now, very quietly and very persistently, Lavender began to withdraw, to evade invitations, to stay at home "with headaches," to make her calls very short and her visits to her dressmaker very long. More than once she was away for a whole day, without either carriage or motor, "very plainly dressed, milady," her maid reported to old Susie, who flushed with triumph under her carmine, and gave the maid a five-pound note for good news.

Be sure that after this old Susie missed nothing. She watched and she paid others to watch, and she found out quite a number of things. And when she thought she had collected enough material for a really irresistible bombshell she wrote to her son.

"Dear Claude," she said, "please come at three to-morrow, without your wife. I have something very important to say to you.—Your affectionate mother, SUZANNE GLASTONBURY."

Of course he went. He found his mother in that confusion of silks and stuffs and woods and metals, carpets and cabinets, statuettes and flowers which she called her drawing-room. He kissed her with careful lightness, sat down on a chintz-covered Chesterfield between a rose the size of a soup-plate and a peony the size of a tea-tray, and said: "Well, mother?"

"It's a very delicate matter," she said, looking at the sparkle of her rings.

"If it's money," he said, with a generous pause that left nothing to be desired.

"It's not money," she answered, "far from it. It's dear Lavender."

Then she told him, in the kindest and most delicate way, all about the short calls and the long dressmaking interviews and the days away, so plainly dressed. He interrupted with a stern:—

"What are you driving at?"

"Nothing," said old Susie, sweetly; "you didn't suppose I meant for a moment anything—anything of *that* sort? But dear Lavender's very young. She's certainly looking much brighter. Haven't you noticed it?"

He had. There was a new rose in his wife's cheeks, a new light in her hazel eyes.

"She's so young," his mother repeated; "perhaps she's formed some undesirable acquaintances. Or someone out of her old life. Don't pull those carnations to pieces, Claude. I only thought you ought to know."

"Thank you," said Claude. "I suppose you haven't said anything of this sort to anyone else?"

"My dearest boy! Now should I?" said Lady Glastonbury.

"I gave him something to think about, anyhow," she told Amelia when she had described to her cousin the interview in its every detail; "but I'm afraid it's not much good *yet*. She's told him some story. He sent me a telegram last night. Like to see it?"

The telegram was short.

"Have spoken to Lavender on the subject of our conversation to-day. Everything is quite all right.—C."

"So that's all right," said Amelia.

"Let us hope so," said old Susie, darkly. "But mark my words, we've not heard the last of this business yet."

It was a fortnight later that old Lady Glastonbury made her great discovery. She and Amelia were on their way to a *matinée*. There was a block in the traffic in one of those low streets where Italians live—Soho, you know. Amelia was secretly furious. She had the middle-aged spinster's passion for the stage, and she knew that they were late already. This delay would make them late beyond the rising of the curtain. Suddenly Lady Glastonbury's thin hand gripped hers.

"Look!" she hissed, rather than whispered. "Did you see that?"

"No. Where? What?"

"That girl," said Lady Glastonbury. "At last I've run her to earth. I'll get out. I'll join you at the theatre. No, don't stop me. I saw her go into a house. Yes, Lavender, of course. Not a word, Amelia. My mind's made up."

She got out of the carriage then and there and picked her way between the motors and horses to the dusty pavement. Amelia saw her enter a tall open door, then the block broke and the carriage moved on.

"Well!" said Amelia. "I never should have believed it. Never in this world."

"I was perfectly right, my dear," said old Susie, rustling disturbingly into her stall

in the middle of the second act. "I've made exhaustive inquiries. That wicked girl has a flat there, calls herself Mrs. Lovell—her maiden name, you know, and what's more there's a Mr. Lovell. They only go there occasionally. I got it all out of the housekeeper. That house is flats."

"Shish!" said the people in the stalls behind, in front, and on both sides.

"I can't sit this out," said Lady Glastonbury, the moment the curtain went down. "I must go straight to Cadogan Square and see Hortense."

"Won't you—think it over?" even Amelia was moved to urge. "You can't undo that sort of thing once you've done it."

"Who wants to undo anything?" asked old Susie. "Not another word." And told her story at length. She rustled out just as the third act began.

At Cadogan Square she learned that her son and his wife were both out. Would not dine at home. She made her way to Lavender's boudoir, and found in the little vellum-covered book no engagement noted for that evening.

Her heart beat high with triumph. Now—at last.

"What did your mistress wear?" she asked Hortense.

"A little sprigged delaine, my lady—straw hat, with roses—very simple—but more *chic* than my lady usually wears on these occasions."

"These occasions?"

"I mean when my lady goes out without the carriage and without milord."

"That will do," said old Lady Glastonbury, very dignified all of a sudden. "Tell them to call a taxi."

Her taxi set her down in Siena Street a little way from those flats. She went in and up the stairs. There was no hall-porter in the dingy cemented passage. And no lift-boy and no lift. Old Susie had to climb the stairs, for Mrs. Lovell's flat was on the top floor. Many, many stairs. She reached the top landing breathless. The door of Mrs. Lovell's flat was open, and as Lady Glastonbury stood panting on the top stair she saw through the crack of that door a kitchen, very bright and neat, with dressers piled with gay, cheap crockery, a white scrubbed table, and the back of someone in a "little sprigged delaine," someone who was, quite plainly, "washing up." In that part

"OLD SUSIE PUSHED THE DOOR OPEN AND WALKED IN. IT WAS A MAN—THAT OTHER PERSON; OLD SUSIE SAW IT."

of the kitchen which was hidden from old Susie's gaze certain movements indicated the presence of another person, even before the person who was washing up called out with what struck old Lady Glastonbury as incredible levity: "Look out, darling; the kettle's boiling over."

It was then that old Susie pushed the door open and walked in. It was a man, that other person; old Susie saw it—a man without a coat; his blue shirt-sleeves rolled to the elbow. At the sound of the newcomer's entrance the girl who was washing-up turned. It was Lavender, of course, and the man, who was bending over a gas-stove, made one leap with a waved teacloth and disappeared through a farther door.

Lavender crossed the room and shut the inner door. She turned off the gas, whose expiring plop broke the silence like a sardonic exclamation. Then she passed behind her visitor and closed the outer door. Then she turned to her mother-in-law and stood, silent, grave, awaiting the attack.

Lady Glastonbury for once found herself at a loss for words.

"I've found you out, you see," was the best she could do after half a minute of a silence which she felt as intolerable.

"I see you have," said Lavender, politely. "It must have given you a great deal of trouble. I hope you find the result worth it?"

"How dare you?" said old Susie. "You ought to go down on your knees and beg me to spare you."

"Ought I?" said Lavender. "And would you?"

"I feel that I am being contaminated by being in this place at all."

"I beg your pardon," said Lavender; "of course, you're not used to kitchens. Shall we go into the sitting-room? Shall I show you the way?"

She opened the door through which that degrading, crouching figure in shirt-sleeves had passed, and the other woman followed her. There was nothing else to do. The sitting-room, like the kitchen, was of a shining neatness. All the furniture was old and beeswaxed to a mirror surface.

"Won't you sit down," said Lavender, wheeling forward a low arm-chair, "since you are here?"

"Why don't you say you are glad to see me?" Lady Glastonbury asked, savagely. "You might as well, while you are about it. Why don't you?"

"Because of course I'm not. I'm sorry. I never meant you to find out."

"Really! You surprise me. No, you shameless girl, I will not sit down in this abode of—misconduct. I came here to expose you, and I mean to do it. I am going, at once—at once! But before I go——"

"You look," said Lavender, interrupting defiantly, "as though you were very glad you had found me out. Why?"

"Such conduct as yours," said the other, rather at a loss, "deserves to be found out."

"I don't want to be disrespectful," said Lavender, "but I don't think you deserve anything at all. Not anything nice, that is. You certainly don't deserve to be told anything. But I will tell you, if you like. I couldn't have gone on with it all, if I hadn't had—*this*."

"Gone on with what?"

"With all that empty scurry and worry that you call life," said Lavender. "I had to have a place to breathe in, so I took this—and this is some of the furniture from home."

"That I'll swear it isn't," was old Susie's rejoinder.

"*My* home, not his. And I come here and do my own marketing, and cook a little and wash up and keep things clean myself, and pretend I've got a real home, not just a houseful of servants. And I know some of the French women, the ones who keep the shops, and they come in and have coffee with me sometimes. And it's a real little life of my own. And I love it," she said, defiantly. "I don't suppose you'll understand, but I've told you because I thought I ought. And now will you please go?"

"Upon my word," said old Lady Glastonbury, and she leaned on the table for support; "you expect me to believe this—this silly tale?"

Lavender shrugged her shoulders delicately.

"No, no, my girl"—old Susie's face was purple under its casing—"young women don't set up secret flats just to do their own housework in and entertain French shopkeepers' wives!"

"I did," said Lavender.

"It takes two birds to build a nest." The flowers in old Susie's hat trembled sympathetically as her hand trembled on the table.

"I made this, alone," said Lavender, very pale and very scornful.

"You wicked little viper," the other woman almost screamed; "but you're lying for nothing, young woman. *I've seen the man.* Through the crack of the door. And I'm going to see him face to face before I leave this room."

"You saw——" Lavender hesitated, incredulous.

"I saw the other dicky-bird that you made this nest for the sake of; the man you've betrayed my poor boy for."

Lavender made a quick movement.

"Oh, it's no use your denying it. He's in there now. And I don't stir till he comes out. Now, my lady!"

Lavender stood irresolute, and old Susie thought in her wicked old heart, "Now I've got you in a corner, my beauty," and she pictured the guilty creature in shirt-sleeves skulking in the room whose door lay behind her between the oak settle and the tall mahogany clock.

Once more Lavender shrugged her shoulders.

"There *is* someone in there," she owned, and old Susie crowed with pleasure; "but I have promised not to tell anyone that anyone but me comes here."

"I dare say you have," said Lady Glastonbury. "Well, whoever he is, out he comes. Call him out."

"No," said Lavender; just that.

"Then I shall." The old woman's voice rose to a shriek, and she turned quickly and beat with her fists on the door.

"Here, come out!" she said. "Come out!"

She drew back as the door opened, and, still in shirt-sleeves because his coat was hanging on the door in the kitchen, the man came out. It was Lord Glastonbury, her son and Lavender's husband!

"Well, mother," he said, and his face was set like a flint.

"I—I just looked in," she said. "I saw dear Lavender come in here this afternoon, and I thought I'd surprise you."

"You have," said Lord Glastonbury.

"I think I must be moving on," said old Susie, groping for her bag and purse on the table.

Lavender stood trembling from head to foot.

"I didn't tell, Claude," she said.

"I know you didn't. Mother, I asked my wife to keep the little secret. We didn't want paragraphs in the paper: 'Peer Pursues Plainness—Society Lady Loves the Simple Life,' and all that rot. Lavender invented the game, and when I found it out she let me play, too. I adore washing-up; and I can cook a chop better than your cook can. You'll keep our secret, won't you?" His tone was light, but eyes and mouth were hard.

"I think I'll have a taxi," said old Susie, weakly.

"Do you mind if I fetch one?" Lord Glastonbury asked his wife.

"Go, of course," she said; and he went.

"Now," said Lavender, with resolution. "I'm going to forgive you. You can't help my doing that. And—you always hated me, and I always hated you. Can't we stop it? I only hate you because you hate me. If you can stop, I can."

"I can't," said old Lady Glastonbury. "You've got Claude and you've got the family jewels, and you didn't bring him a penny, and——"

"You shall have the jewels back, for as long as you like," said Lavender. "I've never worn them, though what you want with them—— Oh! don't let's be hateful. Claude doesn't know all you said—they're double doors. I'll never tell him. No one shall ever know. Let's be friends. Quick, before Claude comes back."

She almost pushed the old lady into a chair.

"Don't cry," she said. "I suppose you couldn't help thinking things like that, if that's how you're made. I'll make Claude send away the cab, and you'll have dinner with us. No one will ever know."

But everybody had to know about the nest, to counteract what everybody thought they knew from the incoherent confidences of cousin Amelia, adrift at the *matinée's* end, to the acquaintances she met coming out. Fortunately, the thing didn't get into the papers, but everybody who was anybody knew and chattered till Lord Glastonbury and his young wife went to live at one of his country houses, where they raise cattle and have a model dairy. There are the strangest stories about the domesticity of their life there, but nothing that is positively scandalous. When people told each other the story they always added: "So that's the third Glastonbury scandal in the last forty years."

"What were the others?" someone would be sure to ask; and the answer would be:—

"Oh, have you forgotten about old Susie? She was a barmaid, you know, and thirty-five if she was a day when Lord Glastonbury's father married her."

WHAT IS THE CLEVEREST CRIME ON RECORD?

A Symposium of Well-Known Criminologists.

The Great Bank of England Robbery.

By FRANK FROEST,

Late Superintendent Criminal Investigation Department, New Scotland Yard.

I CAN imagine some adroit rogues smiling at the attempt to chronicle the cleverest crime. For, of course, the cleverest crime is that in which no one suspects that a crime has been committed at all. There have been murders of this kind, but since murder is casual rather than professional crime, it might be resented by the enterprising criminal classes—who are not without a certain vanity—were their claims to distinction ignored.

Murder apart, crime in its higher branches has long been almost a science, though the names of some of its most eminent professors are, for obvious reasons, little known to the general public. Indeed, among the exploits of some of these audacious and resourceful rascals, it is hard to choose.

Possibly no more ambitious *coup* was ever planned than that which originated many years ago in the brain of Walter Sheridan, an American adventurer whose genius—if the word may be used—had placed him foremost of the world's great thieves. He it was who conceived the idea of robbing the Bank of England of no less than half a million pounds—a plot that failed through no fault of his.

When he conceived the idea he was already, even by modern standards, a rich man.

First of all he gathered around him a combination of proved and skilled "crooks"—men whose icy nerve and fertile ingenuity were only short of his own. There were George Wilkes, Andrew Roberts, Frank Gleason, Austin Bidwell, George Bidwell, and George Macdonnell—a gang of picked cosmopolitans whose combination, if it had been known, would have galvanized into activity every detective bureau in the world.

Point by point with infinite deliberation and care the scheme was thrashed out till every contingency that human brains could foresee was provided for. These were experienced men—men who knew they were standing between the prison gates and an immense fortune—and they were taking no chances. The origination and the actual execution of the scheme were many years apart.

It was to the Bidwells and Macdonnell and another man still living that the main execution of the project was confided, but after their arrival in London their lack of self-control and general looseness of living caused Sheridan and the others to withdraw. Had the master-brain of the conspiracy remained at the helm the Bank would have suffered even more grievously than it did.

To Austin Bidwell then fell the main *rôle*. Into the Burlington Gardens branch of the Bank of England there strolled one day a spruce, alert gentleman, by name Warren, who wished to open an account. His credentials were unimpeachable, and no suspicions entered the minds of the officials that the first shot in the greatest campaign that had ever been organized against them had been fired. For some time "Mr. Warren" ran an ordinary business account. He let it be known that he was a manufacturer, and that he contemplated opening a branch of his business—the building of Pullman cars—at Birmingham. His financial operations,

he observed, would be large—a remark which at least was strictly true.

Still further to build up the confidence of the Bank in their new client a bill for four thousand five hundred pounds, which had been accepted by Rothschilds, was paid in. It was a genuine bill, and was, of course, discounted. Thus the ground-bait was laid. The real fishing was about to begin.

Bill after bill began to pour in, all accepted by great firms, and the Bank discounted them without the faintest misgiving. The only limit to the operations of the conspirators seemed to be the date on which the earliest bill would come to maturity—they were all three-months' bills—when, of course, it would be exposed as a forgery. But before that time they would be scattered to the ends of the earth. Nothing but their own carelessness could expose them before they were ready.

Every precaution to cleverly blind the trail against the day of exposure was taken. As cash accumulated to the credit of Warren in the Bank of England it was paid to one Horton in the Continental Bank. Both of these names were *aliases* of the swindlers. As quickly as the money was paid into the Continental it was drawn out in notes. The notes were at once changed for gold, and again the gold for notes. It was a simple method of making the money untraceable.

So at last more than one hundred thousand pounds had been obtained by the conspirators, and they had little reason to doubt that they would ultimately obtain the full half-million at which Sheridan had originally aimed. But success had made them careless, and a most trivial oversight at last brought about their ruin.

Two bills purporting to have been accepted by Rothschilds were paid in, but when they came to be examined the Bank noticed that no date had been filled in. It was a thing that might have occurred with the most honest firm in the world—a matter not worth worrying the busy Mr. Warren about. What more simple than to send a message along to Rothschilds with the bills and a polite request that the date should be inserted? Half an hour later the Bank awoke to the fact that it had been swindled—swindled of a cool one hundred thousand pounds!

Then it was that the police were called in. It took them a little while to run down the fourth member of the gang—a man who had played a comparatively small part in the swindle—but the others were wary. Their precautions against surprise had been automatic, and they dodged like hunted hares. But with all their cleverness they could not stop their arrested confederate from talking.

The police-hunt ranged over the globe. George Bidwell was found in Edinburgh; Austin Bidwell got as far as Cuba, whence he was extradited; Macdonnell dashed for New York.

Those were the days when the New York Detective Bureau remained still unpurged, and when it was notorious that criminals paid tribute to the "Bank Ring" for police protection. Macdonnell, with a fair proportion of the plunder about him, hoped, with some show of reason, that even if his destination became known he would be able to put up a successful fight against British justice. But he forgot one factor against him. The Bank cabled to Pinkertons—and Pinkertons were unbribable. The actual arrest was made by the official detectives, though there was something of a race between their launch and that of the Pinkerton men when the *Thuringia*, with Macdonnell on board, was sighted off Sandy Hook. Macdonnell was eventually extradited, and asserted at his trial that he had paid a considerable sum of money to the "Bank Ring."

All the criminals were sentenced to long terms of penal servitude, and though it is certain that large sums were offered to secure their escape, they never found a sufficiently venal official in the English prison service.

Sheridan and his other satellites, it may be observed, withdrew from the campaign against the Bank of England only to organize a gigantic forgery scheme in the United States, by which hundreds of people were ruined and an amount of about two million five hundred thousand dollars secured to the conspirators. For this particular crime Sheridan was never brought to justice.

The Million-Dollar Counterfeiting.

By TIGHE HOPKINS.

In the summer of 1880 there fell into the hands of an expert of the Treasury Department, Washington, a new and very elegant United States five-dollar bill of the Government issue of 1875. The expert thought it the prettiest thing of its kind that he had ever

seen. Having duly admired, he began to suspect the bill; it seemed a touch too perfect. He took it to the Treasury Department, looked up the numbers, and found that chance had bestowed on him a veritable masterpiece of forgery. Thus, to be brief, opened that amazing drama, "the Million-Dollar Counterfeiting."

The next step was the discovery of certain wonderful Canadian counterfeits. Canada, in fact, during the spring of 1880, was flooded with spurious bills, the most dangerous, because the finest, that had ever circulated. Banks could not tell them from the legal issue. Mr. Harrington, the signer of the Canadian notes, could not say which was his true and which the false signature. In Canada and the States, bogus money to the tune of a million dollars was in currency; and finance began to be alarmed.

Authority summoned to its aid that invincible detective, John Wilson Murray. Murray (an Edinburgh man by birth) was just then at the top of his faculties. Born in 1840, he had fought in the Navy through the Civil War, and at this date was completing his fifth year of service with the Canadian Government.

When the facts were spread before him Murray perceived that he had in hand the most formidable task of his career. It was, however, an ancient line of work with him, and he went straight to New York and beat up a few of the old gang. One ex-forger after another sampled the bills, and the shrewdest among them were agreed that the artist could be none other than "old man Johnson," "Ed." or Edwin Johnson, the best man at the game in all the world. Murray, of course, knew as much about "old man Johnson" as any detective *could* know; but this, in truth, was not a great deal. Born in England, Johnson was a person of education, and had married an educated Englishwoman. As a young man he had settled with his wife in America, following there the calling or profession of engraver. It was during the Civil War period that suspicion first attached to him as a maker of counterfeit plates; but for many years he had lived unobserved, and none of Murray's advisers could hint at his present whereabouts. Notwithstanding the secrecy and quietness of the forger's existence, his fame among the whole crooked confraternity was immense; and, unless a greater than Johnson had arisen to depose him, Johnson it was who had made the plates for the Million-Dollar Counterfeiting.

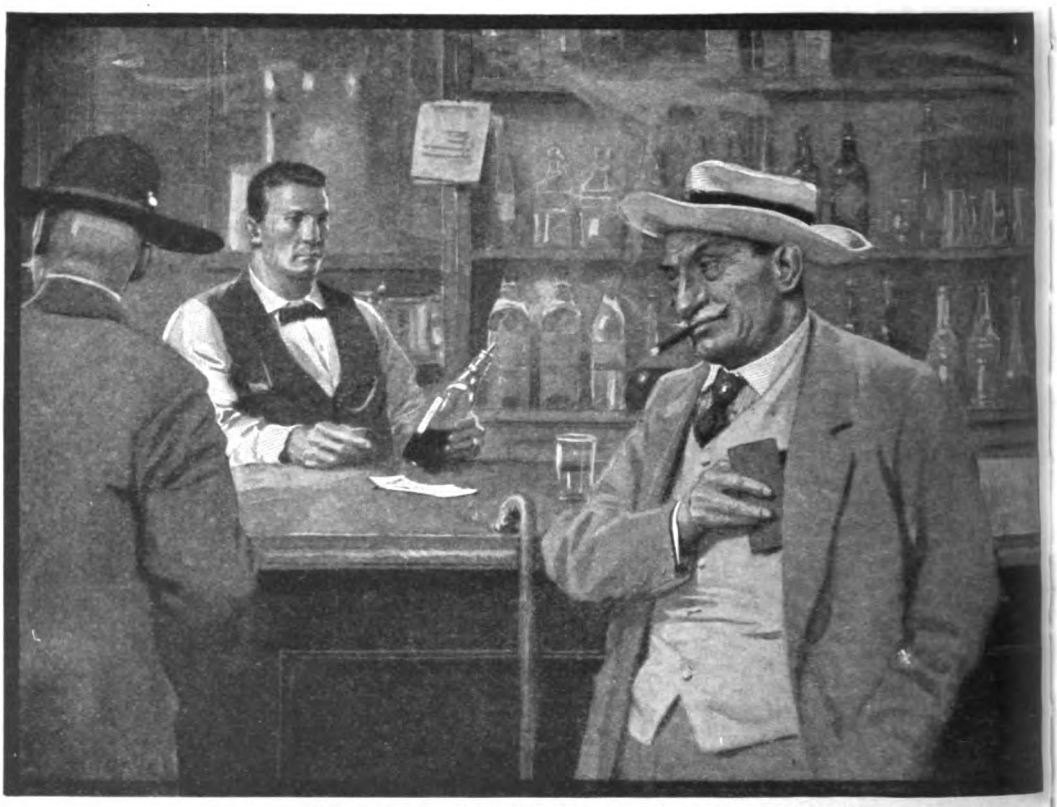
Through Albany, Troy, Chicago, Indianapolis, the master-detective sought the tracks of the master-counterfeiter. At Indianapolis he was told that six years earlier Johnson and his family had lived there in style: horses, equipages, and a retinue of servants. Trouble had arisen over bank-notes; a canny lawyer had received a fee of five thousand pounds, and Johnson had got clear. "In the family," says Murray, "were Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, two beautiful girls, and five boys. The daughters were Jessie and Annie Johnson, both clever, accomplished girls. The boys were Tom, Charlie, Johnnie, Elijah, and David Henry. I knew three of them myself."

From Indianapolis it was reported they had eloped to Cincinnati; but neither this nor any other locality tapped by the detective yielded him the vaguest clue. Back in New York, he learned two things: that the Johnsons were now again—as was supposed—in very affluent case, and that the old man used occasionally "to get on drunks," to the concern of his family and the peril of their common enterprise. Only in drink did he venture to "shove the queer," or pass the false notes.

Had the family gone abroad, Murray wondered, or were they established in Canada "in personal charge of the distribution of the counterfeit money"? He took train to Toronto; and there, in a saloon over against the station, he beheld Johnnie Johnson. Him the detective followed as a star to a comely house in Hazleton Avenue.

Opposite to this house he next morning took an apartment, where for five days he sat steadily on the watch. Not a creature left the house, and its sole visitors were the butcher, the baker, and the milkman. Murray had with him a recent portrait of Johnson *père*, and, stored in his mind, a dozen intimate descriptions. At seven a.m. on the sixth day the door of the house he watched was opened, and a very brisk and dapper little man stepped out and took his way jauntily down the street. It was the king of counterfeiters, bent on one of his periodical sprees—the last he was to indulge in!

Murray in an instant was on his heels. At almost every drinking-shop down the town the old man took a refresher; but so long as he kept his wits he paid for his liquor in coin. At last he laid on the counter a nice new dollar bill, which the detective promptly secured from the bar-tender. It was a fresh Dominion bill. Murray had finished his business!



"SO LONG AS HE KEPT HIS WITS HE PAID FOR HIS LIQUOR IN COIN.

The old man went his way, dropping bills in every saloon. Having gathered of them what would serve his purpose, Murray laid a quiet hand on the dapper little man, who was not too far gone to realize his undoing. The matter being carpeted, Johnson was, of course, for squaring it. "We'll talk it over," said Murray; and, beckoning a cab, he haled his man to prison. "Name your amount," said Johnson on the following day. "Nothing for me except the plates," answered Murray. "A foolish fellow!" said Johnson.

The plates Murray was resolved on having; and at last Johnson gave in. "I'll show you where they are," he said. He was ushered from his cell into a closed carriage, which, at the prisoner's direction, was driven to a wooded hill above Toronto. Here were dug up forty thousand dollars' worth of plates, the handiwork of a genius. In his ruin, the old artist's pride found a voice. "I am the best!" he exclaimed, "and one of my boys may become better than I."

Before his trial he told Murray the whole story.

He made the plates in the States. His daughters forged the signatures. They had been trained in forging or duplicating signatures since childhood. They would spend hours a day duplicating a single signature, and would work at the one name for months, writing it countless thousands of times. Jessie was better on larger handwriting, and Annie was better on smaller handwriting. The boys were learning to be engravers, and one or two of them were so proficient that the old man spoke of them with joy. The printing of the notes was done once a year, and the plates were then immediately encased in beeswax and oilcloth and buried. To this day, in Canada and the United States, the bills of the Million-Dollar Counterfeiting are in actual use as currency, and nobody knows them; the triumph and vengeance of their creator beyond his prison, beyond his grave; for I think he died in captivity.

In a matter of murder, the character of Lacénaire would offer an interesting problem. Were the case one of robbery, the adventure of Raymond (the thief of the Gainsborough picture) among the diamonds of South Africa would be worth presentation.

AT LAST HE LAID ON THE COUNTER A NICE NEW DOLLAR BILL."

For a high example of humour in crime, and inimitable skill in disguise, Anthelme Collet would be the man. But among forgers, in a moderately wide survey, I have not met the equal of "old man Johnson."

The Greatest of Insurance Swindles.

By ARTHUR MORRISON.

YOUR question might have been more carefully phrased; as it stands it obviously leaves it open to me to claim that the cleverest crime ever committed was one of my own, so clever as never to have been discovered, and now, in accordance with a famous principle of English law, not to be disclosed for fear of self-incrimination. This would save me a deal of trouble; and, indeed, apart from crimes of my own, it would seem that most of the cleverest must be unknown, because undetected. But of crimes discovered and therefore recorded I am able, with some effort of memory, to recall several of much ingenuity; and it should not be forgotten that many crimes of fraud, now dull and commonplace, were triumphs of criminal genius when first invented. The "long firm" frauds are an instance; the slavish imitator has destroyed their credit. The "Spanish prisoner" swindle is another specimen, similarly overdone. But casting about in my remembrance for a good example, one that may not be the cleverest revealed swindle, but fit to rank with the best, I bethink me of a very splendid insurance fraud designed in America a good many years ago.

The great characteristic of this swindle was its completeness. The swindlers included a doctor, a clergyman, an undertaker, an hotel-keeper, an insurance agent, and a corpse. The corpse was quite innocent, but materially assisted in the swindle, nevertheless. In the beginning the plot clustered about Charles Thomas, agent for several

wealthy insurance companies. He promoted the insurance of the life of another conspirator, Edward Burnham, in each and all of the companies he represented. The doctor who passed Burnham for insurance was also in the swindle, and he afterwards prepared certain drugs which gave Burnham all the symptoms of dangerous illness. But meantime the gang, who were prepared to put capital into the enterprise and to wait for it to reach maturity, set up another of their number, Edward Parker, as an undertaker, on quite a respectable scale of business, with horses, hearses, carriages, assistants, and all the requirements of the trade. Parker was really only required for one funeral, but meantime he earned something towards the general expenses, and gave himself a more genuine and respectable appearance, by conducting as many other funerals as he could get entrusted to him. More than a year passed now before the plot was developed. Burnham, the insured person, then went to stay at the hotel of a perfectly innocent hotel-keeper, who was an impartial witness to the apparent illness which overtook his guest. As soon as the symptoms grew alarming a doctor was called in—a perfectly innocent and independent doctor—who, of course, did his best for the patient, who was apparently suffering from a desperate attack of dysentery. This doctor was carefully chosen from among the best-known and most respected in the neighbourhood, with a view to the weight of his evidence later, when he would be called upon to testify to the very low condition of the patient at the time. The medicines provided by this excellent man were pitched out of window, and drugs provided by the fraudulent doctor in the background were substituted, so that Burnham's condition deteriorated most artistically on scientific principles that gave all the appearances of a hopeless case.

When the patient was apparently at the point of death he was removed, on a plausible excuse, in an ambulance, with every circumstance of extreme care, to another hotel, kept—this one—not by an innocent man, but by Orrin Thomas, another of the gang. An embalmed corpse was bought from the Buffalo Medical College and smuggled into the hotel, while Burnham, relieved of his course of drugs, got up perfectly well and prepared to attend his own funeral. At this hotel the swindler-doctor was in attendance, and, the death having been duly announced, he gave his certificate in due form, and Parker, the undertaker, was called in to coffin the purchased corpse and conduct the funeral. All was accordingly done; the swindler-clergyman officiated, and a very fine and expensive funeral took place, all the plotters being present in proper mourning, including one Kennedy, a lawyer, who had been the legal adviser all through, and who had prepared a proper will, leaving all the property of the supposed deceased, including, of course, the insurance money, to one of the gang—afterwards to be divided when all was quiet.

Everything seemed to go admirably. The total sum due from all the insurance companies was very large, and no doubt would have been paid over, and the whole thing concluded without discovery, but for an apprehension which struck the swindlers immediately after the funeral. The buried corpse had been embalmed with arsenic, and it struck the doctor-plotter that it would remain as fresh as ever for years. The different insurance companies were unaware that Thomas had insured Burnham in so many other companies, and if by any chance they discovered the fact, they might grow suspicious and exhume the body. That would never do. So Parker the undertaker was deputed to dig the body up the next night, get rid of it, and fill in the grave as before. He took a horse and cart and certain of the conspirators to help, and set about the task. But just as the corpse was taken up and put in a sack there was an alarm, and the conspirators flung it down and bolted, leaving the horse and cart; and straightway the whole laborious swindle exploded in a moment, and there was the end of it.

A Riddle for Criminologists.

By MAX PEMBERTON.

THE cleverest crime within my knowledge was one for which, it appears, it would have been difficult to prosecute anybody.

The details of it were told to me by the late Mr. Streeter, the famous diamond merchant, of Bond Street.

He had at that time a notorious millionaire Austrian among his clients, and was

in the habit of selling him historic jewellery for very large sums of money. One day this Austrian sent to Bond Street a certain Count X., very well known to the Court of Vienna and undoubtedly a *persona grata* to the Emperor. Count X. had a letter of introduction from the millionaire, in which the latter said that Mr. Streeter might safely trust his friend for any reasonable amount.

Naturally, proper courtesy was shown to so distinguished a stranger. "What can I do for your Excellency?" asked Mr. Streeter. The answer was that some diamonds could be shown him.

"I am here," said the Count, "to buy a really historic jewel—something memorable, and price is no object. Show me the finest stones you have."

This sounded promising, and Mr. Streeter produced some of his most wonderful diamonds. One of these, called, I think, "The Crown of Asia," was priced at four thousand guineas. Count X. immediately said that it was the very stone for him.

"You can send it to the hotel," he said; "meanwhile, if you could match it, I would gladly pay you eight thousand guineas for the pair."

Mr. Streeter at once said that the difficulties of matching such a stone were probably insurmountable, but that if it were matched, then a pair of such diamonds would be worth not eight thousand, but at least twelve thousand guineas. To this view Count X. assented, pleading ignorance as an excuse for his previous offer.

"I will pay you twelve thousand guineas if you can sell me the pair," he said, and indicated subsequently that they were being bought for a Russian princess whose name he could not disclose. With this intimation he returned to his hotel, whither, on the strength of the millionaire's recommendation, the diamond was sent to him that afternoon.

Now, the diamond trade is practically a ring, and any dealer who has a good thing on, but cannot undertake it himself, can readily communicate with other dealers who will help him out of the transaction.

On this occasion, what Mr. Streeter did was to issue to the diamond trade an exact account of the stone he required and of the sum he was willing to pay for it.

He was to get twelve thousand guineas for the pair; therefore he could afford to offer as much as six thousand pounds for the stone which would match the one he had. That had cost him three thousand pounds; so, giving six thousand for a second, he made an extra two thousand pounds odd by selling the pair.

This notice went out broadcast to the diamond trade. Among others, it reached a famous pawnbroker in the Strand, who, directly he had read it, exclaimed, "Why, the very diamond required was pawned with us to-day."

This turned out to be a fact.

There was the stone, answering Mr. Streeter's description in all respects. The pawnbroker turned up the books and found that a certain Count X. had pledged it for a hundred pounds. When asked to take more by the assistant, the Count had declined.

"My remittances have not come from Vienna," he said. "I merely want enough money to get on with."

Of course, the pawnbroker was very much excited by this discovery. He wondered if Count X. would turn up soon, and was delighted when that affable nobleman appeared in his shop next day.

"Will you sell the stone?" he asked, eagerly.

The Count, with charming nonchalance, declared that he had not thought about it.

"But," he said, "if you would make me an offer——"

"Oh," said the pawnbroker, "I might give you five thousand pounds."

"Not enough," said the Count, and so the wrangle went on. In the end, the pawnbroker bought the diamond for five thousand five hundred pounds and carried it triumphantly to Bond Street. Alas, it was Mr. Streeter's own diamond—the one he was trying to match!

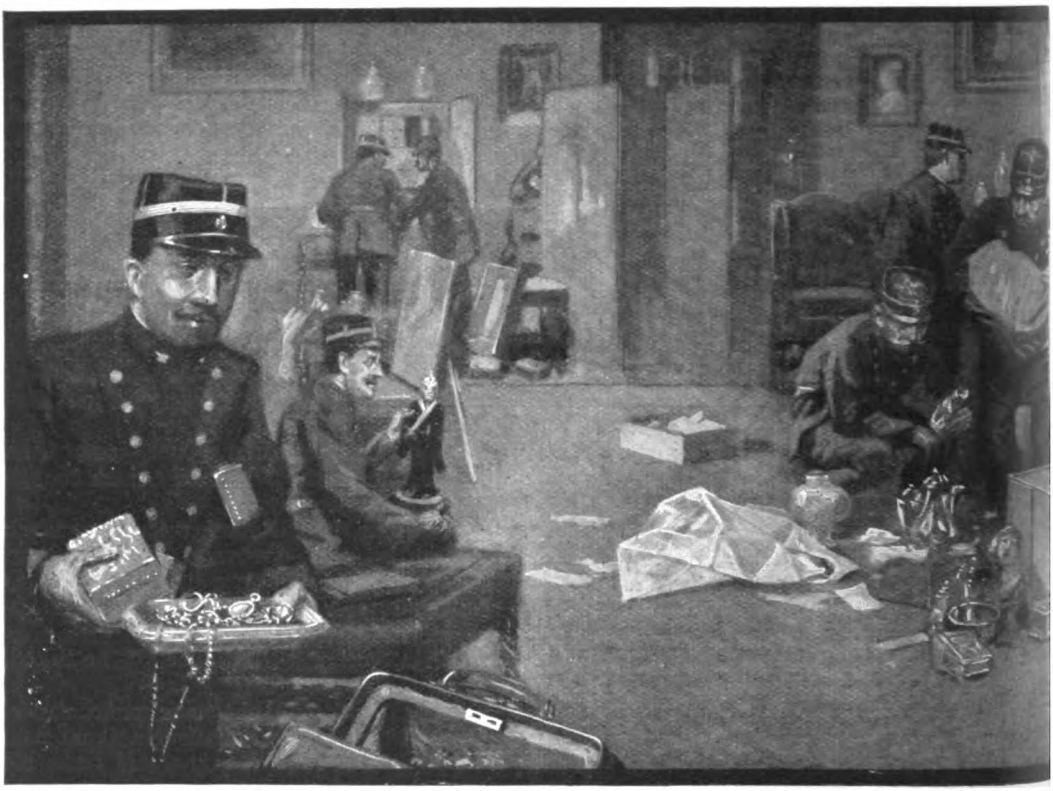
That afternoon Count X. came to Bond Street and paid him the four thousand guineas he owed him. He had received five thousand five hundred pounds from the pawnbroker, and so was thirteen hundred pounds in pocket.

Of course, he must have been a very shrewd swindler and perfectly acquainted with the tricks of the diamond trade. He knew that Mr. Streeter would issue a circular and that the pawnbroker would get it. So, directly he obtained the diamond in Bond Street, he went down to the Strand and pawned it for a trivial sum. In any case, he had money enough to pay for it, should he have been taxed with disposing of it.

Who could prosecute this man?

There were no false pretences.

The pawnbroker bought the diamond at



"THE POLICE THEN PROCEEDED TO MAKE A THOROUGH SEARCH OF THE MARQUIS'S RESIDENCE. A NUMBER OF VALUABLE CURIOS,

his own price. He was not asked to buy it.

Streeter suffered no loss—yet Count X. calmly put thirteen hundred pounds in his pocket. Surely one of the most ingenious tricks on record.

A Famous Crook Comedy.

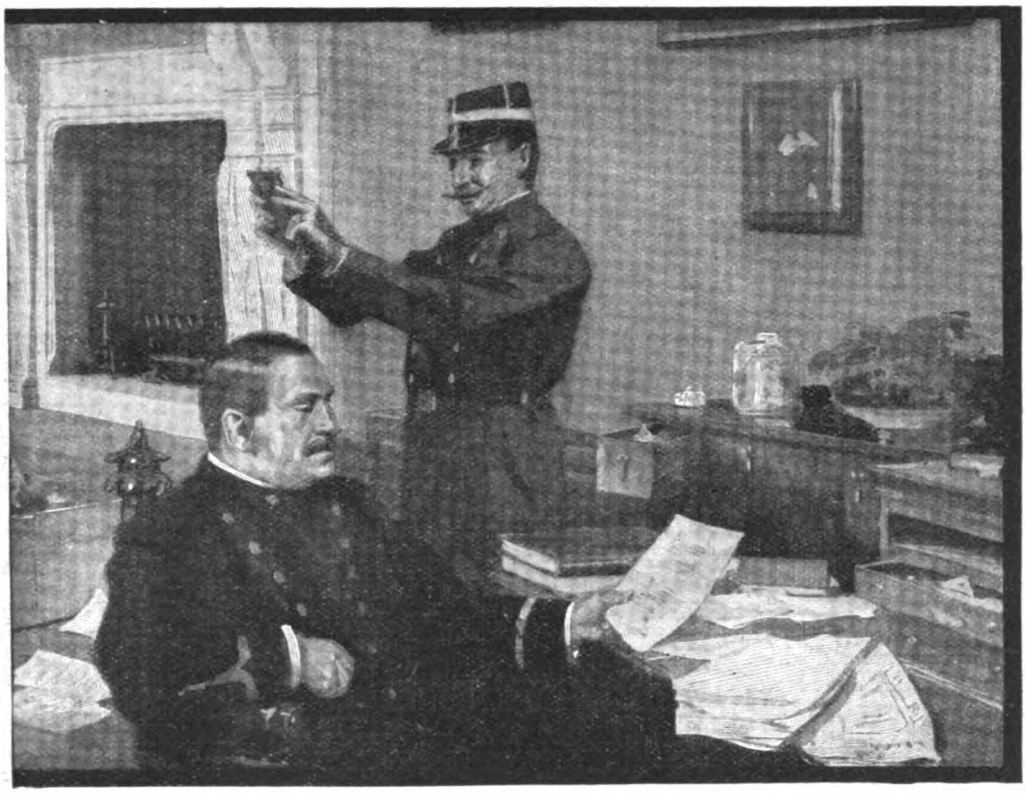
By GEORGE R. SIMS.

THERE are so many famous crimes that have been carried out with consummate skill that it is a little difficult to say which is "the cleverest crime on record." But one of the cleverest was that invented, arranged, and produced by a notorious French criminal, named Renard, who was at the head of a gang of international thieves, and had agents and associates in all the chief cities in Europe and a special agency in London—it was managed by a relative of his—for the disposal of stolen securities.

It was while the Panama scandal was at its height in Paris, and many of the noblest and most highly-placed Frenchmen were either involved in it or suspected of being involved in it, and certain disclosures were made of such a startling character that they led to the temporary resignation of the Minister of Justice, that Renard had a brilliant idea, which he had no sooner conceived than he proceeded to carry out. He carried it out in a manner which more than justifies me in offering his crime as my contribution to this symposium.

Renard had ascertained that the Marquis Panisse-Passis, who had an old family mansion in the Parc Monceau, had departed for his place at Nice, taking with him the bulk of his domestic staff and leaving his Paris residence well secured and in charge of two trusted servants, viz., the *concierge* and his wife.

One evening a number of officials, headed



THEY BROKE OPEN ALL THE SAFES AND PLATE-CHESTS, SECURED THE PLATE AND THE JEWELLERY, AND SOME FINE OLD CHINA."

by a Commissary of Police in the orthodox frock-coat, tall hat, and white gloves, arrived at the Panisse-Passis mansion. The high police official wore the ribbon of the Legion of Honour in his buttonhole. Having announced himself to the alarmed *concierge* he was, of course, at once admitted. He then told the *concierge* to prepare for a visit from a higher official still, the Prefect of Police. Presently the Prefect of Police arrived, accompanied by several *sergents-de-ville* in uniform. He informed the now terrified doorkeeper that the marquis, his master, was accused of having received a cheque for three hundred thousand francs from the Panama Company, and that he, the *concierge*, acting for his master and knowing the source of the cheque, had obtained payment of it, and that he must consider himself under arrest.

The *concierge*, who protested his innocence, was locked in a room in the charge of a police-officer, and the same treatment was accorded to his wife. Previous to the arrest the Commissary had shown the *concierge* a paper, signed by a magistrate, empowering the police to make a complete search of the premises for incriminating documents. Directly the *concierge* and his wife had been secured and shut away the Commissary directed one of the officers to put on the *concierge's* white apron and black cap and proceed to the lodge in order to receive and get rid of any inopportune visitors.

The police then proceeded to make a thorough search of the marquis's residence. They broke open all the safes and plate-chests, secured the plate and the jewellery, a number of valuable curios, some fine old china, a collection of rare autographs, and a number of valuable oil paintings. They also took possession of all the securities payable to bearer, and in their search for incriminating documents seized everything of value. Then they loaded the property on to two cabs which were waiting for them.

The official search being now complete, the Prefect ordered the *concierge* and his wife to be released, informing them that they were to consider themselves under arrest, and if they attempted to leave the house it

would be held by the authorities to be convincing proof of their guilt. They could remain where they were till the morning, when an examining magistrate would attend and take their statement as to how far they were concerned in the marquis's nefarious transactions with the Panama Company.

With the departure of the police the *concierge* could take a calmer view of things, and he came to the conclusion that the police methods had been, to say the least of them, peculiar. Convinced that something was wrong, he went to the nearest police-office and gave information of what had happened.

The real police, as soon as they arrived on the premises and examined them, were of the opinion that the *concierge* and his wife had been parties to a put-up job, and that their story of the police raid was an invention. But the marquis, who had been telegraphed for, came at once to Paris and assured the authorities that the man and his wife were old and trusted servants who were quite above suspicion.

The affair created an enormous sensation in Paris. For a time it was even more talked about than the Panama revelations. The daring of the thing appealed to the Parisian imagination. The Prefect of Police, accompanied by his official staff, had paid a domiciliary visit to the house of a nobleman in order to seize and take away proofs of his dishonourable conduct, and the Prefect, the Commissary, the *sergents-de-ville*, all correctly costumed for the parts they played, had been just a band of burglars!

The police made a list of all the valuable articles stolen and advertised them, but this only served to put the thieves on their guard. Eventually, just as the Parisians were beginning to make up their minds that the mystery of the "thieves as police" would remain unsolved, a detective got some valuable information from an ex convict to whom he had shown a kindness. "Find Pierre Alleaume," the detective was told, "and you will be on the right track."

Pierre Alleaume was discovered to be the latest *alias* of a professional thief, whose real name was Tajean. He was traced to his residence in Paris, and when the police raided the house they found not only M. Alleaume, but an enormous quantity of stolen jewellery and valuable plate, and among it the jewels and some of the plate stolen from the marquis.

Alleaume refused to incriminate his accomplices, but in his possession was found a pocket-book, and in this pocket book was a list of names and addresses, and several of these names were known by the police to be borne by members of a criminal gang. Among the arrests made in consequence of their find was a man named "Paul the Coachman," an ex-convict who had become a cab proprietor. It was discovered that it was he who had impersonated the Prefect of Police, and they were his cabs that had been used to remove the stolen property.

"Paul the Coachman," whose real name was Paul Jally, was arrested in a wine shop in the Avenue Hoche, and the arrest was made at a lucky moment, for drinking with Paul was a gentleman of whose antecedents the police were fully aware. He proved to be the redoubtable Renard, a man of European notoriety as a master criminal. It was he who had conceived and stage-managed the great *coup*, and he himself had played the part of the Commissary of Police.

Renard was a man of many addresses and many names. He lived in one set of apartments under the name of Morelle in the Avenue Barbier; in a charming little flat in Paris he was Boutet, and he resided in another street under the name of Deschamps. He had also a home in London, where under another name he passed as a highly respectable member of society.

M. Renard, the man of many homes and many names, had brought off any number of big *coups* in his time, but never a *coup* more ingeniously planned and more daringly carried out than the police burglary at the residence of the Marquis Panisse-Passis. The fact that he and his associates came to grief was due to no shortcoming on his part, but to the treachery of an ex-convict who had not received an invitation to take a part in M. Renard's new and original crook comedy—a comedy which was played, I venture to think, in connection with one of the cleverest crimes on record.

TAKE HER OUT

by

MAY EDGINTON

Illustrated by
LEWIS BAUMER

"I'LL take you out," said George.

"Why, George?" exclaimed Mrs. Luckett.

"Because I'm a generous kind of man," replied George.

"Where?" cried Mrs. Luckett.

"To—to dinner and an evening's enjoyment," replied George.

"When?" cried Mrs. Luckett.

"I am not sure," replied George.

Mrs. Luckett calmed herself.

George sat behind his newspaper like a king behind the screen of his royal privacy, and drank his large cup of tea with a benign air. He was wearing his white waistcoat to business that day, as he had felt slightly reckless when he got up, and very nice he looked. Mrs. George sat with a happy smile upon her face, unrolling in her abstraction the curls which were usually left undisturbed till later in the day, although she always removed the pins while dressing, as she knew that no true lady ever descended to breakfast wearing them.

"Well," said George, "I must run for my train."

"George, dear," replied his wife, rousing herself for a moment from a rosy dream, "be sure to hang your serviette from quite as far as the top button when you're lunching, won't you? You're almost too stout to wear white at meals."

"You mustn't find fault," said George. "I'm going to take you out."

"No, love," said Mrs. Luckett, "I won't."

Mrs. Luckett brushed George's hat in the hall, while George hummed a little sentimental tune.

"A man likes to take his wife out," said he.

"Does he, George?" replied Mrs. Luckett, with an air of surprise, as if wondering at her husband's long repression of this kindly taste.

"Believe me, he does," said George, hurriedly, fitting on his hat.

"When will it be, George?" asked Mrs. Luckett, clinging to the project with the embarrassing tenaciousness of woman; for what she thought was that a husband might enjoy taking his wife out now, but not again, and she had her splendid quality of feminine fixity on a good thing.

"We must think it over," replied George, pulling open the front door, and considerably hampered in his attempted movements.

"But, lovey," said Mrs. Luckett, "I shall have to prepare."

"It does nobody any harm to be prepared for anything," replied George. "Let go of me, dear, and prepare."

Blending a happy air of promise with all the *finesse* learned in twelve domestic years, George edged through the front door, the garden gate, and ran.

"AN AWKWARD PERSON FROM WHOM HE HAD RECENTLY WON MONEY, WHO RAN BESIDE HIM."

George met a man before he reached the station, an awkward person from whom he had recently won money, who ran beside him, keeping up with George, although he quickened his pace and although there was a long time to spare before the train started, and who said as he ran :—

"When are you coming round again to my little place, Mr. Luckett, to give me a chance of seeing my six-and-sixpence back ?"

"I don't know," panted George, running on. "I gotter take my wife out. You know what it is ?"

"No, I don't," replied the pertinacious person, easily keeping up.

"Well, you'd ought to," gasped George. "I take my wife out like a man should. Yes, I gotter take her out."

As George entered the office he was met by the youngest daughter of his employer, a dear child who was clever at school and who looked like all the Local Examinations, Higher and Lower, localized in one female body, and she held out to him, with a smile that glinted from her glasses like a ray of the sun on the office window, a collecting-box, for she had arrived early that morning to beg alms for the Cab Horses' Christmas Dinner.

But George, looking at her sorrowfully, yet firmly, was able to say : "I wish I could, Miss Boggins ; but Christmas's coming, and I've got to take my wife out."

Mr. Boggins was standing by, and he said, sympathetically : "Ah ! ah !" so that George added, with some effect :—

"*You* know how it is, sir. They'd ought to be taken out at Christmas."

And Mr. Boggins answered : "Ah ! ah !"

Assuming his paper-cuffs, George pinned a sheet of blotting-paper over his waistcoat — for his earlier recklessness was a thought impaired by the call which it now seemed certain would be made upon it at no very distant date — and seated himself at his desk. Next him was a colleague who had made an arrangement—he said it gave social grace to the daily round — with George that they should ask each other out to lunch once every alternate week.

"HE WAS MET BY THE YOUNGEST DAUGHTER OF HIS EMPLOYER."

George's turn had now come to exercise his hospitality, but this morning he knew that it was only his duty to explain.

"Old fellow, I'll have to let my feed stand over this time. We can continue from yours again next week, if you like, and then there'll be the Christmas break. I'll have to owe you this lunch till after the New Year, for I gotter take my wife out."

It was a hard, a gruelling day, and at the end of it the senior clerk asked George and the junior to stay overtime the next evening. George removed his paper-cuffs, unpinned his blotting-paper breastplate, and mourned, indicating the junior: "*He* can stay, I've no doubt, sir, and there's nothing I'd like better, but I gotter take my wife out."

Having persisted in his conscientious objections, the Benedict left for home with his usual punctuality, and the smell of good cooking encountered in the gloaming at his garden gate gave him several fine thoughts, chief among which was: "How the faithful service of a wife is stimulated by a little loving encouragement! She's looking forward to me taking her out."

At dinner Mrs. Luckett remarked:—

"George, my dress is all ready. It's spread on the spare-room bed, if you'd like to have a look. It's my old taffeta what was bursting in the body, and I took and ripped the brim of my velvet hat, and that silk petticoat which aunt left me——"

"It'd better be to-morrow, then," said George, like a fox hard-pressed and baffled in all known directions by the earth-stoppers.

"—— and I matched it up with sateen," resumed Mrs. Luckett, "and I rushed out just before dinner and bought a penny box of boot-buttons and sealing-waxed them blue to match, and I took and undid poor mother's fur tippet——"

"Meet me outside the Tottenham Court Road Tube Station at seven," said George, appealingly.

"—— which was so very old-fashioned," resumed Mrs. Luckett, "and next I got a bit of wadding and a skein of red silk, and I thought to myself——"

In this vein the lady's innocent delight voiced itself most of the evening, and later, when she went to sleep, she was murmuring: "You may rely on me to be punctual, George. Oh, very—ve—ry punctual, oh—very—ve—ry—punk—hunk—honk—honk—— !"

At breakfast the next morning it was exhilarating to hear George say:—

"If I gotter take you out, I shall need my cheque-book."

When he got to the City he cashed a cheque for several shillings, for he did not intend to be mean on this night of nights. Many times that day, unable to escape from the obsession, he smacked his pocket and muttered confidentially to the senior or junior clerk:—

"Money'll fly! Money'll fly! Did I tell you I'm taking Mrs. Luckett out to-night?"

Seven o'clock that evening found George's wife waiting outside the Tottenham Court Road Tube Station. She had put on the gown that comprised the old taffeta, the brim of her velvet hat, the silk petticoat inherited from her aunt, a pennyworth of boot-buttons sealing-waxed blue, her defunct mother's fur tippet, a piece of wadding and a skein of red silk, and very well-dressed she looked, a wife of whom any suburban gentleman such as George might be proud indeed. For half an hour this nice woman waited there, and she had just frowned haughtily at the second passenger who had accidentally jostled her on his hurrying way, and the second passenger had just raised his hat in apology to her air of ladylike rebuke, when George came, looking bullyingly at his watch as if it were trying to argue with him.

"You're rather late, dear," said Mrs. Luckett, seizing his arm, "and how relieved I am to see you!"

"You mustn't grumble," replied George, "when I'm taking you out."

George was in a hurry, he said. "Come, come, I want my dinner," as if all the restaurants in London and all the cooks in them had been created to minister to his requirements. The impression he gave was a very lordly one, and Mrs. Luckett, running along somewhat in George's wake, although still managing to retain his arm, felt proud of him. They entered, at the end of a long fight with traffic, a little restaurant, where Mrs. Luckett was only too glad to fall, breathless, into a chair at the table George indicated.

"Now!" said George, picking up the menu-card. "Now! Now! Now!"

It was *table d'hôte*, so George agreed, after frowning at it severely: "Waiter, we'll have it all."

"Oh, George!" said Mrs. Luckett, admiringly.

"Well," said George, "I'm taking you out, aren't I? There's nothing mean about me."

George picked up the wine-list and read its several pages through from beginning to end, and then went back again to the beginning. He hummed a little and pursed his lips.

"Well, my dear," he said, "what will you drink? Water—or—or—or water?"

"Water, thank you, George," replied his wife.

George closed the wine-list quickly.

"Well," said he, "you needn't be so dogged about it, so determined, when I'm taking you out; but if you will drink water, I suppose you will. Waiter, I'll have a large Bass, and get me an evening paper."

George folded his evening paper to a size to lie conveniently beside his plate.

"You can look about, my dear," he said, kindly.

During dinner George read his paper, missing not a word of it all, while Mrs. Luckett, assuming the bright air of a woman who is thoroughly enjoying herself, looked about her, and she noticed several other ladies of similar age and appearance to herself adapting themselves gracefully to similar situations.

"RAISED HIS HAT IN APOLOGY TO HER AIR OF LADYLIKE REBUKE."

The restaurant seemed populated with these good, nice women, whose kind husbands were taking them out.

There was, indeed, only one member of the feminine sex who occupied the whole attention of her escort, and Mrs. Luckett quickly placed her in an undesirable category as a person whom, at home, she would not think of knowing.

Mrs. Luckett was still making an inventory of this young woman's entire attributes from her boots upward when George looked up for the first time from his deep perusal of the *Nightcap*, and said, generously:—

"As you won't take coffee, my dear, we'll be going. Evening's not over yet. No, no, evening's not *nearly* over yet. There's more to come."

As his wife took his arm outside she remarked, in a reserved voice: "I was noticing a young person right at the other end of the restaurant——"

"Ah," said George, "tallish girl, fairish, white tops to her boots, a check skirt, and a black jacket, two rings on the fore-finger of her right hand, and diamond ear-drops; dark eyebrows, mole under the left ear; got her hair waved——"

"George!" cried his wife, admiringly, "what an observer you are! And reading the paper all the time, too. I've always thought you'd have done for Scotland Yard."

"Dare say, my dear," said George, recollecting himself, hastily. "Dare say. Now I'm afraid we're too late for a theatre, and the halls are sure to be full. Now—now?"—George considered—"Now—now! It's too early to go home," he added, rather reluctantly.

Mrs. Luckett rested trustfully on his arm.

"Might try the pictures near Marble Arch," said George. "And as there's plenty of time we may as well walk. I need exercise."

It was after nine o'clock by the time George dropped her, pale but bright, into one of the red plush fauteuils, for which he paid sixpence each. Soon Mrs. Luckett was absorbed in the entrancing doings of the most entrancing hero—who had a little, motherless girl-child—whom she had ever seen, and whom the noble dog was the means of introducing to the rich and childless young widow, after burglars had taken all that they had, and the little girl had been—temporarily—kidnapped, and the express train—without a driver, as he had fallen off in a fit—came within an inch of running over everybody as they took turns

to hold each other down on the railway track.

While the compassionate lady sobbed and feared terribly for the safety of all concerned, George went outside for a drink, and when he returned, after an hour's absence, he had a later edition of the *Nightcap* in his hand.

"I'll read it going home," he whispered to her.

Homeward the Tube train bore them; George once more immersed in his reading, Mrs. Luckett, wan and worn indeed, but still bright of bearing and with a strange, confident look, an expectant look of future, in her eyes. As she fell asleep, after having assured George of the success of the evening, she was murmuring to herself: "Evening's not over yet! No, not over yet. More—to—come—more——!"

"THERE WAS ONLY ONE MEMBER OF THE FEMININE SEX WHO OCCUPIED THE WHOLE ATTENTION OF HER ESCORT."

The expectant look still beamed in Mrs. Luckett's eye as she cooked George's breakfast the next morning. It beamed and brightened as she saw him away and turned within again.

Mrs. Luckett sat down at the davenport in her drawing room, and wrote several notes to "My dear Mrs. Budd," "My dear Mrs. Todsley," and many other ladies up and down the road, asking them to come and take tea with her that afternoon. Mrs. Luckett dispatched these by the hand of the daily-girl, who arrived at nine. When the daily girl came back with all the polite notes of acceptance, Mrs. Luckett took her string bag and her housekeeping purse.

"For George," she said, unworthily. "I'll make up something to-night. I'll diddle him."

Mrs. Luckett spent what should rightly have nourished her husband in other channels. She bought six penny sponge-cakes, which will make twelve fingers, and you jam them at home. She bought a threepenny-ha'penny tin of chicken paste, and half a pound of mixed biscuits. She took every little tender blade of the mustard-and-cress that she was growing on George's old socks in the scullery window.

The somewhat curtailed space of the drawing-room was entirely taken up by the visitors that afternoon, and there were sponge-fingers, mixed biscuits, savoury sandwiches and salad sandwiches, and everybody who came wore white gloves.

As Mrs. Luckett poured out tea, in the dress comprised of the old taffeta, etcetera, she introduced the time-honoured subject of Christmas, and from Christmas she went on to seasonable festivities, and then she said to her circle:—

"We're expecting to be quiet this time. I go out so much that it will be a relief to stay at home quietly with George. I'm feeling very tired to-day, such a time as we had of it last night! George is always pressing me to come out. Last night, if you please, I was to meet him in town to 'dine—done up as I was with all these Christmas preparations. You don't like to disappoint a man, of course, so I went. I just threw on this old thing I've got on now, and I took and went.

"The worst of a lady going up by herself to meet her husband in town in the evening is that gentlemen *will* speak to her. They roam and prey about in the evenings. Two raised their hats to me. I didn't dare tell George with his jealous nature.

"He took me to one of these French places—the dinner was beautiful, but it was a very fast place: I could see that at a glance. Going out as much as I do, I can tell. Still, I'm not narrow-minded, and Mr. Luckett knows I'm not. I like to see life. When I go out to dine in one of these French places I just

"WE WERE TOO LATE AFTER DINNER TO GET GOOD SEATS AT ANY THEATRE, AND GEORGE DON'T CARE TO TRY THE GALLERY. WE WENT TO THE PICTURES, AND IT WAS—MAGNIFICENT!"

look round and take it all in. Only way to enjoy yourself, I think.

"Some more tea, dear?

"There's one thing I must say, that I wish George wouldn't do—I wish he wouldn't always press wine on me. Went through the whole list of wine and spirits, if you please, George did, last night, trying to tempt me. Not that I touched anything. I can't abear it. You're making a poor tea, Mrs. Todsley.

"We were too late after dinner to get good seats at any theatre, and George don't care to try the gallery. We went to the pictures, and *it was—magnificent!* They do improve these cinemas nowadays. . . . . And if it hadn't been for that faithful dog, they'd never have come together. Even a dog can do something, you see. It makes you think about Providence, don't it? . . . . But my heart was in my mouth, I can tell you, when that train came dashing along at quite ninety miles an hour if it came one. Yes, I'm tired to-day, as I said before, but George enjoys it, and if I get rather done up with going out so much—well, we women know how to sacrifice ourselves, don't we, Mrs. Budd?"

Mrs. Luckett let the daily-girl put away the best china when the ladies had gone, for the matter of George's dinner was exiguous indeed. But George's wife triumphed.

George said, while he sat at table facing the weary but happy lady: "Well, my dear, I hope you really enjoyed yourself last night. I did all I could. I meant to take you out and I took you out, and gave you a first-class time."

"Yes, George," murmured Mrs. Luckett, as from a smiling dream.

"It isn't every man takes his wife out," George pursued. "Mr. Budd wouldn't, nor Mr. Todsley wouldn't, nor any of the other gentlemen in this road."

"No, George," replied Mrs. Luckett, still dreamily, "I know that."

"It cost a pretty penny," said George, "and I didn't grudge it. I meant that you should enjoy yourself top-hole, so I took you out, and I hope you'll remember it. You had a prime evening—a regular round of pleasure such as few married ladies are given, but all that pleasure of yours cost—why, it must have cost——"

"Only one-and-a-ha'penny, George," said Mrs. Luckett, starting from her reverie, "Exactly one-and-a-ha'penny."

THE INDIAN HERCULES.

The Amazing Feats of Professor Rama Murti Naidu.

THE INDIAN HERCULES.

By SAINT NIHAL SINGH.

SOME time ago, when I was stopping at the Taj Mahal Palace Hotel at Bombay, a friend took my breath away by telling me that he proposed to take me that night to see the weirdest and most wonderful performance in the world. He told me that I would see, with my own eyes, an elephant step on the stomach of a man, who would immediately get up, unhurt by the tons of dead weight concentrated on his solar plexus. He also informed me that I would see this marvellous strong man stop two motor-cars that were being driven at full power in opposite directions. He held out other promises, the details of which I skip in favour of a description of the actual performance.

It was rather late when we reached the pandal—a huge tent with a seating capacity of a couple of thousand persons or more, and full to overflowing when we entered. We had hardly taken our seats when a brass band played by Indians struck up the tune, "See the Conquering Hero Comes," that ushered into the arena the strong man—Professor Rama Murti Naidu, born a little more than thirty years ago in an obscure village in the Madras Presidency, and famed all over his country as the "Indian Hercules."

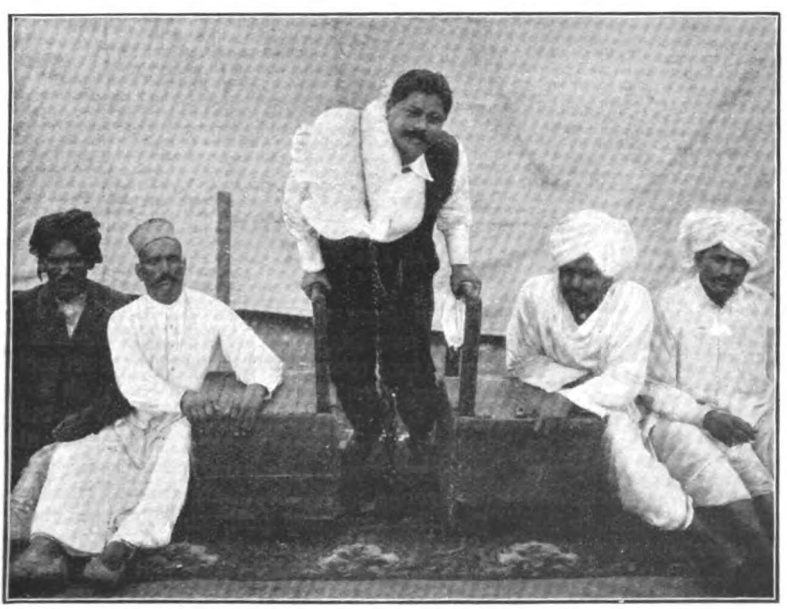


FIG. I.—LIFTING FOUR MEN BY MEANS OF A CHAIN OVER THE SHOULDER.

Short and rather stout, dark-complexioned, and black-haired was he. We sat very near him, but we could not see anything remarkable about his physique. No Sandow-like muscular development nor any other sign of phenomenal strength was apparent. He was not dressed in the rig of an acrobat, but wore evening clothes, and looked as if he might have just strolled out of a club in Pall Mall.

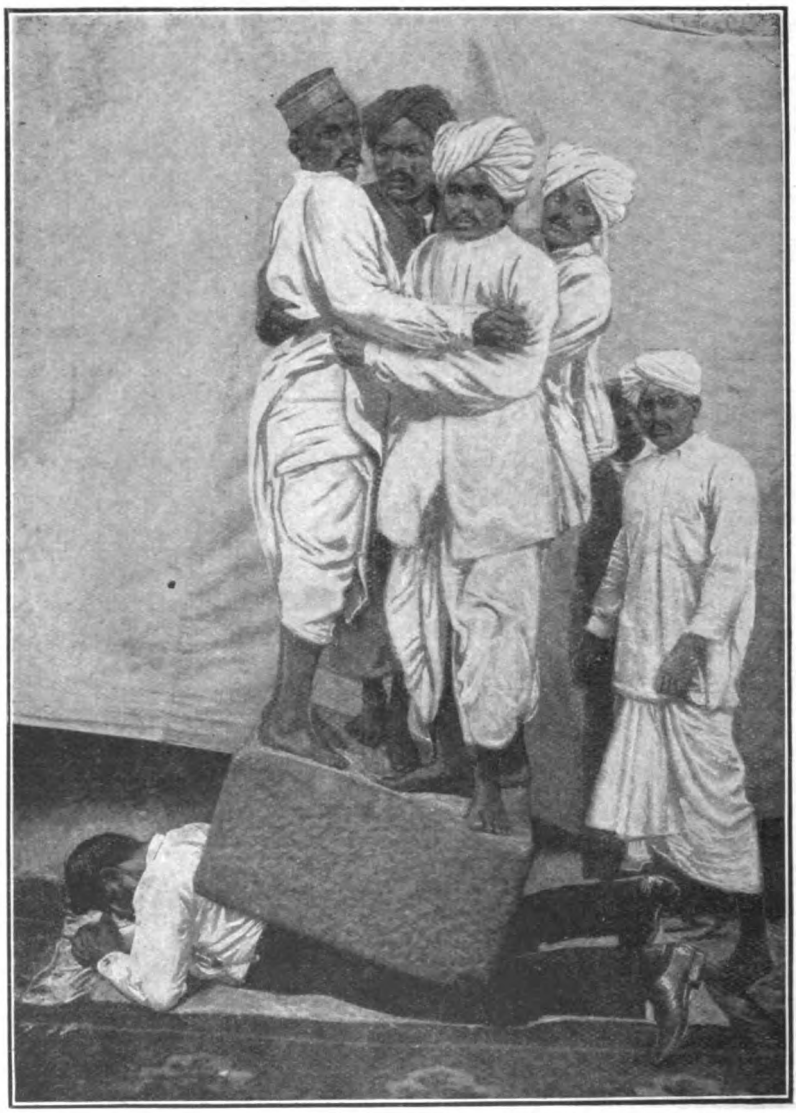


FIG. 2.—ONE OF THE PROFESSOR'S MOST EXTRAORDINARY FEATS—SUPPORTING A STONE WEIGHING OVER A TON, ON WHICH FOUR NATIVES ARE STANDING.

We were waiting to see the elephant step on him and leave him unhurt; but instead of showing that or any other feat, he began with a speech. He said that what he was going to show us that evening would not be accomplished by physical strength, but by spiritual power. He was able to bear the weight of the elephant on his stomach, and to perform other feats, solely through his ability to direct all his forces to any spot in his body that he chose to strengthen. He had acquired that power, he said, by holding communion with the Unseen—or practising *yoga*, as it is called. He told us that he was a vegetarian, did not eat flesh of any kind, and abjured even eggs and fish. He did not drink liquors of any kind, and took no drugs. This speech would have been very interesting had we not been over-eager to see how he performed his feats.

Finally he prepared for action by taking off his coat and waistcoat and handing them to an attendant, who, unlike himself, was gaily garbed in Indian costume. He stood with one hand on each of two chairs that had been placed in the arena, with his feet braced against a large wooden beam, around which had been passed a long, strong, heavy iron chain, whose strength had been previously tested by a tug-of-war between two parties of men from the audience. A pillow was placed over his right shoulder, the chain was drawn taut over it, and the ends were securely fastened together. Four attendants took their place, two on each end of the beam to hold it steady (Fig. 1). The strong man suddenly stood erect and lifted the lot of them from the ground as if they were so many babies. Then he gave one pull, and lo! the chain snapped—right across the centre of one of the links and not where the ends had been joined together.

Next he lay flat on the ground, and six

men, with crowbars and a roller, hoisted a huge stone weighing a ton up on his back. Four men climbed on the top of it (Fig. 2), stood there for some time, and then, descending, grasped heavy sledge-hammers and struck the boulder time after time (Fig. 3). Then the professor, with a sudden twist, tossed the stone off his back as if it had been a penny piece. In his next act the same stone was again placed on his back, and a horse and rider mounted it and stood there for a few minutes. When they dismounted, another slab was placed on the top of it and broken to bits with sledge-hammers. As before, he carelessly tossed the stone from his body.

His next act was to permit two heavy transport wagons, filled with men and boys from the audience, to be driven over his body simultaneously, the wheel of one across his chest, and the wheel of the other across his thighs (Fig. 4). No cushions were placed over his body to protect him. The wheels sank deep into his flesh. But they did not appear to hurt him, for he rose nonchalantly and walked to his dressing-room unassisted.

Almost immediately he returned, to permit a twelve-horse-power taxi-cab to be driven over him at full speed (Fig. 5). He lay on his side with his shoulder fitting into the curve of a wooden block with a sloping top. One wheel of the motor-car rolled up the slope of the block and passed over his body, which received its whole weight, without hurting him in the least.

Rama Murti next stopped two twelve-horse-power motor-cars that were being driven at full power in opposite directions. A long rope with leather loops was fastened to each car. The strong man slipped his arms through the loops, caught hold of the smaller loops with his hands, and braced himself. In spite of the fact that their powerful engines were working, the cars were unable to budge the fraction of an inch (Fig. 6).

Following this, he expanded his chest to fifty-six inches, in spite of the fact that a long chain was pulled tight round it by four sailors from a warship that was in harbour at the time, who were in the audience (Fig. 7). Then he expelled his breath until his chest measurement was normal—forty-seven inches—and the chain dropped to the ground.

Last of all can the elephant turn. Rama Murti bound a wide cloth tightly about his abdomen, waist, and head. Then he lay on his back on the ground. A cushion was placed on his chest, and a plank was laid on it. The elephant, which weighed between three and four tons, walked across the plank (Fig. 8). The man appeared to flatten out as the weight of the big beast crashed down on him, but immediately afterwards he was able to stand up and bow to the audience, which went wild over the exhibition.

Rama Murti had the honour of performing before their Majesties King George and

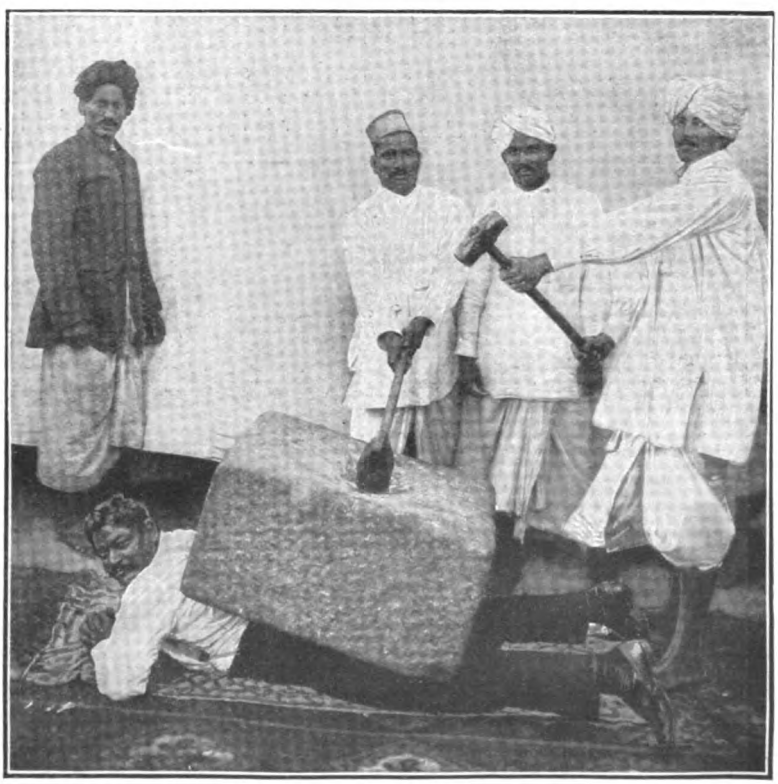


FIG. 3.—HERE THE STONE SEEN IN THE PREVIOUS PICTURE IS BEING STRUCK WITH HEAVY SLEDGE-HAMMERS.

FIG. 4.—TWO HEAVY WAGONS, FILLED WITH MEN AND BOYS, BEING DRIVEN OVER THE PROFESSOR'S BODY.

Queen Mary when, as Prince and Princess of Wales, they visited India in 1906. So pleased were they with his wonderful exhibition that he was awarded a gold medal. He has also performed before many of the Indian Rajahs. They have all shown their gracious appreciation of the professor's talent by awarding him gold and silver medals and valuable gifts. His Highness the late Nizam of Hyderabad gave him a purse containing a large sum of money, while his Highness the late Maharajah of Nabha bestowed upon him robes of cloth of gold, an elephant, and a large diamond of the first water. Over seventy of the medals given him by Rajahs, high British officials, including the

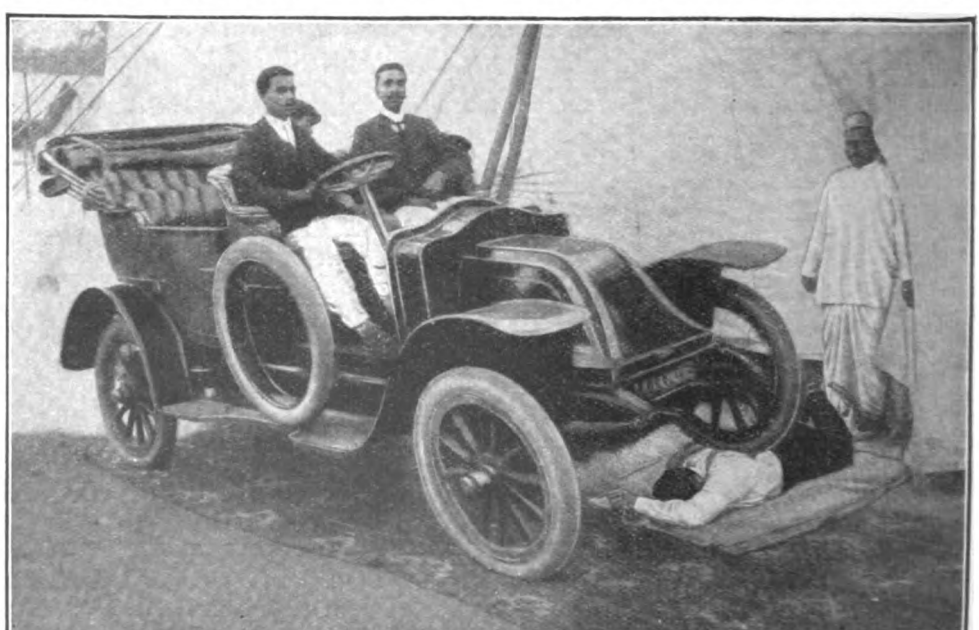


FIG. 5.—HERE HE IS SEEN ALLOWING A TWELVE-HORSE-POWER VEHICLE TO RUN OVER HIM AT FULL SPEED.

late Lord Minto, and public bodies and associations in India, are shown in our last illustration (Fig. 9).

The box-office receipts show that the people of India lavish their patronage on Rama Murti with no less enthusiasm than do the Rajahs and other high personages. He performs seven days a week, and usually twice a day. His receipts range from Rs.1,000 (£66 13s. 4d.) to Rs.5,000 (£333 6s. 8d.) at each performance. Some time ago he came to London, but refused to give his exhibitions on the music-hall stage unless he was paid £1,000 a week. This amount, he states, was much less than what he normally earned in India, but the London managers, while willing to pay a high salary, could not afford to give him the amount he asked. As a consequence, the capital of the Empire lost the opportunity of witnessing the most marvellous feats ever exhibited on the stage of a variety theatre.

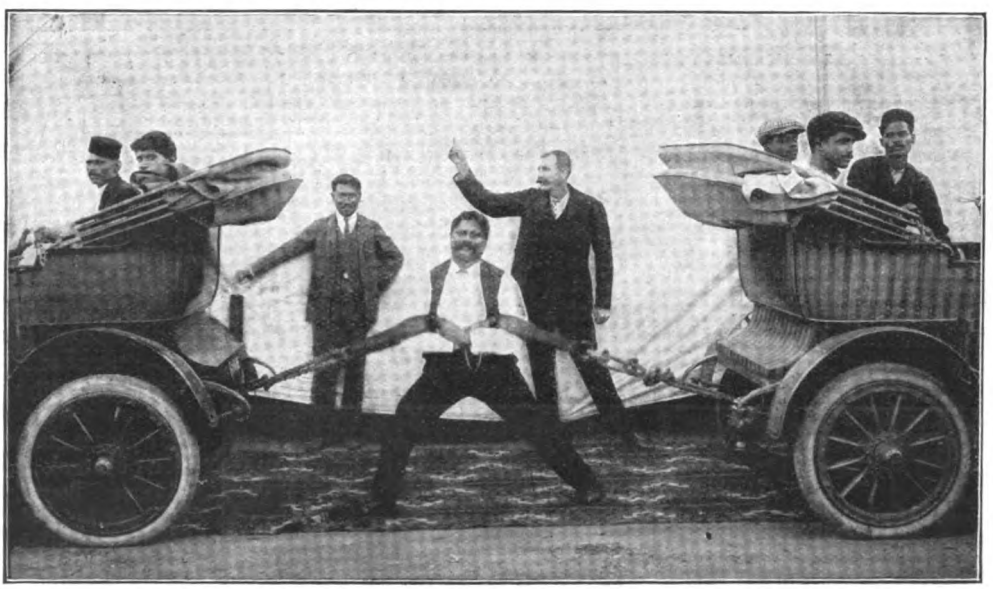


FIG. 6.—STOPPING TWO MOTOR-CARS THAT ARE BEING DRIVEN IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS AT FULL POWER.

The "Indian Hercules" came into public favour all of a sudden a few years ago. His feat with the elephant captured the public imagination from the very beginning. He did not stumble upon that turn, as the reader might think. Long and concentrated thought enabled him to evolve the idea, and he put great labour into acquiring the ability to carry it out. This is the story that he told me.

In his childhood, before he started school, he was weak and sickly. Finding study distasteful to him, he took to roaming about, and fell in with wrestlers, whose profession appealed to his romantic nature. They taught him the exercises which almost since the beginning of time have been handed down from generation to generation in India. A few years' association with the strong men transformed the boy's physique.

To please his father, who was a police inspector, Rama Murti continued to go to school, but his heart was in physical culture, and not in academics. He learned gymnastics and drill, and in a few years he became so proficient that he acted in an honorary capacity to teach others the use of horizontal and parallel bars and other apparatus. He passed through the Sidapet Physical Training College at Madras, and graduated from it with high honours.

A severe reprimand from a police magistrate made him realize that if he wanted to keep out of jail he must stop wandering about and take life seriously. The only avocation he could follow was to obtain a situation with a circus. He did this. The circus, however, broke up, and he was once again thrown on his own resources.

He turned exclusively to Indian exercises, determined that he would acquire strength that would outrival that possessed by any other man, Occidental or Oriental.

At this time he conceived the notion of investigating the great Hindu traditions

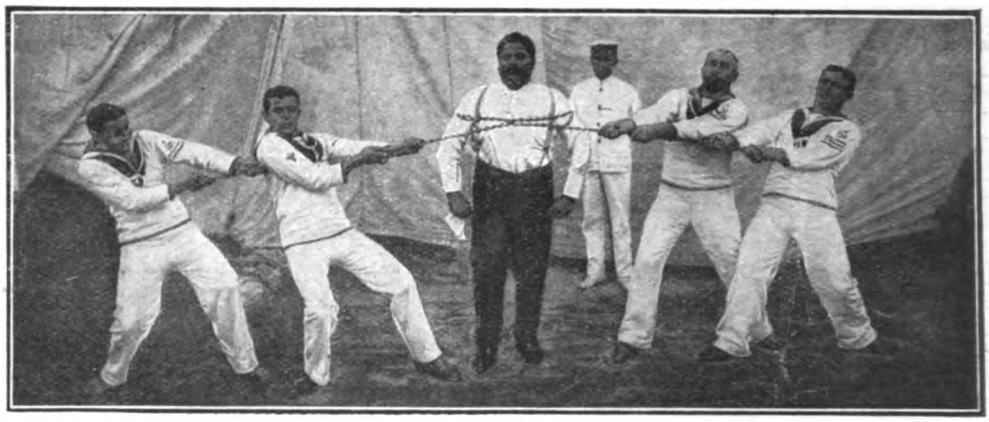


FIG. 7.—FOUR BRITISH SAILORS PULLING A CHAIN TIGHT ROUND THE PROFESSOR'S CHEST, WHICH, NEVERTHELESS, HE WAS ABLE TO EXPAND TO FIFTY-SIX INCHES.

attributing almost unbelievable feats of strength to various heroes, in the endeavour to discover the methods that enabled them to perform deeds famous through history. He was particularly impressed by the episode from the epic, the Ramayana, relating to the Hindu god Hanuman, who is depicted as a monkey, and curiously enough anticipates the Darwinian theory regarding the origin of our species. This monkey-god performed the miracle of lifting a mountain on his palm and setting it down in the sea, in order to form a bridge between India and Ceylon. He did this to enable Rama, the hero of the Ramayana, to cross over to Ceylon to rescue his wife Sita, who had been kidnapped by Ravana, the king of that island. Tradition has it that the rocks jutting out of the water, which are now being utilized to build a railway from India towards Ceylon, are parts of the mountain that Hanuman dropped into the sea. Rama Murti took this episode literally, and not symbolically. He told himself that he could become capable of lifting great weights if he could only master the monkey-god's secret.

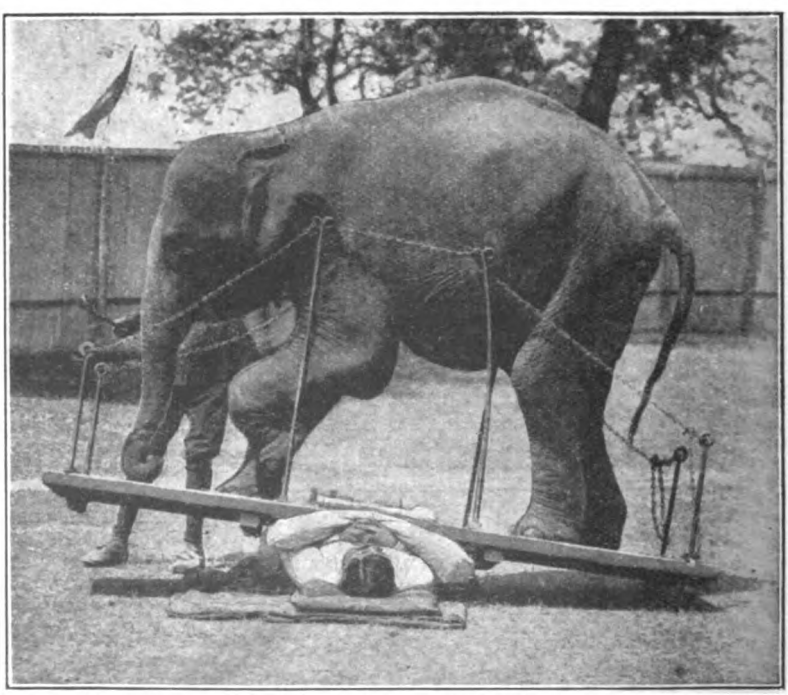


FIG. 8.—SUPPORTING ON HIS CHEST AN ELEPHANT WEIGHING BETWEEN THREE AND FOUR TONS—UNDOUBTEDLY THE MOST REMARKABLE PERFORMANCE BY THE INDIAN HERCULES.

He delved deep into the epics and sacred lore of the Hindus. He sought the company of saints and mendicants. He went to places of pilgrimage. These excursions intensified his determination. He saw men and women performing wonderful penances. Two or three instances

especially fired his imagination. One of these was the penance performed by persons who had forsaken the world and were crucifying the flesh to gain salvation, by lying naked on the sharp points of long spikes that had been driven through a board the length and breadth of a human body. The other penance was that performed by men who sat nude on the burning sand, underneath the midsummer sun, surrounded on all sides by blazing bonfires.

The deductions that Rama Murti drew from these exhibitions were that the human will could be made inflexible, and that the human body could be forced to bear any hardship or pain, provided the will had been properly trained. He concluded that Hanuman and the other Hindu heroes had performed what appeared to be miracles to the moderns, not through extraordinary physical strength, but through a wonderful power to direct and control the will.

The Hindu scriptures showed the way to a complete mastery of the will. It was a simple, albeit a most exacting, course. It consisted merely of driving out of the mind all thoughts and desires, and concentrating the thought upon one object and one alone—God. To achieve such an end sounds easy enough to anyone who has not tried it; but those who have attempted to concentrate the mind on any one subject know how prone it is to wander. Only by the most persistent effort can any man acquire the power to shut out of his mind all subjects other than the one on which he wishes to meditate. Regular exercises, however, have been handed down in India, and the faithful performance of them has enabled many persons to acquire a self-mastery that appears nothing short of marvellous.

Rama Murti devoted himself to the cultivation of an absolutely inflexible will-power, that would render him insensible to all pain. He learned the secret of going into a trance whenever he wished to do so, and thereby rendering himself unconscious of all feeling. He further cultivated the ability to concentrate all his life forces—as he calls them—at one or more points in his body, so that great weight imposed upon them will not crush his bones or strain his muscles.

He tells me that it is within the power of any person to let an elephant step on his body without mangling him, if he only knows how to throw himself into a trance and concentrate his strength at the points of his body that must bear the burden of the beast's weight. The price for acquiring such skill is not ingenuity, but untiring perseverance and great labour.

I cannot pass any opinion upon what he says. What I know is this: no other man in any part of the world has been known to duplicate Rama Murti's feats. I further know that Rama Murti does not disdain to perform regularly the physical exercises which have been favoured by Indian wrestlers from time immemorial. Whether he performs his turns in virtue of the physical strength that these have given him, or by sheer will-power, he alone knows. If I were to venture an opinion, I would say that both these agencies are responsible for his ability to perform such hair-raising feats.

FIG. 9.—SOME OF THE MEDALS GIVEN TO THE PROFESSOR BY RAJAHS, HIGH BRITISH OFFICIALS, AND OTHERS.

Irregular Forces.

A Story of Chess and War.

By RAYMUND ALLEN.

Illustrated by Warwick Reynolds.

LEVOFF raised his eyes from the chess-board in front of him to glance at Muravine, who was reflectively tapping a map with the end of a pen.

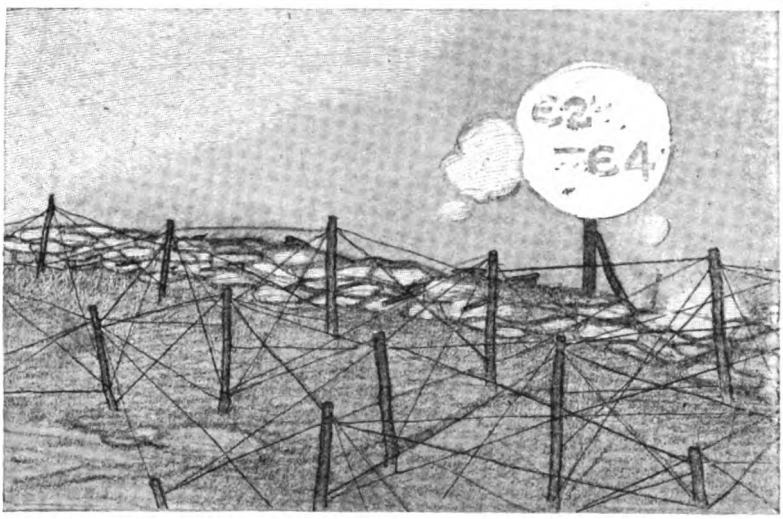
"No good, my dear Boris. Unless you can show me some method of doubling my forces, or how to dispose them in two places at once, you must withdraw your wistful gaze from the hills."

"I suppose so," the other replied. "I suppose we must just wait for their attack when the river goes down, but it seems rather tame strategy."

Levoff was the senior in rank and some years the elder, but family ties, knit closer by their comradeship in war, had established a brotherly equality between them in their private intimacy.

The scene of the conversation was a house behind the lines of Russian trenches and snugly hidden in a fold of a wooded slope.

That position was simple enough in its essentials. It was a curious little backwater of the great war, independent, on both sides, of the larger operations, and not sufficiently



important to figure in the public bulletins, even if the local conditions had not condemned it to long weeks of featureless inactivity. The function of Levoff's command, not very many hundreds strong, was to serve as a screen to a small town that lay some miles behind the entrenched position. The town was not of sufficient military importance to hold in really large force, and he had been informed that the exigencies of wider operations elsewhere precluded any probability of his reinforcement. Its occupation by the enemy was to be delayed and made as expensive as possible—all the better, of course, if it could be prevented. For the rest, he would be left alone to play his own hand as best he could.

The falling of the river, until which event nothing more vigorous on either side could be undertaken than sniping and occasional mild bombardment, was a process of Nature that, in this particular stream, was accomplished each year in season with astonishing rapidity.

Muravine put away the map and joined his chief in his study of the chess-board.

"Not such a dreary deadlock as the real thing," he observed. "Why can't they take our knight?"

"They can, if they like, but in any case I think their position is becoming untenable. We ought to push in their left wing and crush them."

"I am glad," Muravine remarked. "It may seem absurd, but the winning of the game is coming to assume some actual military importance."

"How so?" Levoff asked. "The playing of it is of some use if it helps to keep the men amused, but what is the particular significance of winning?"

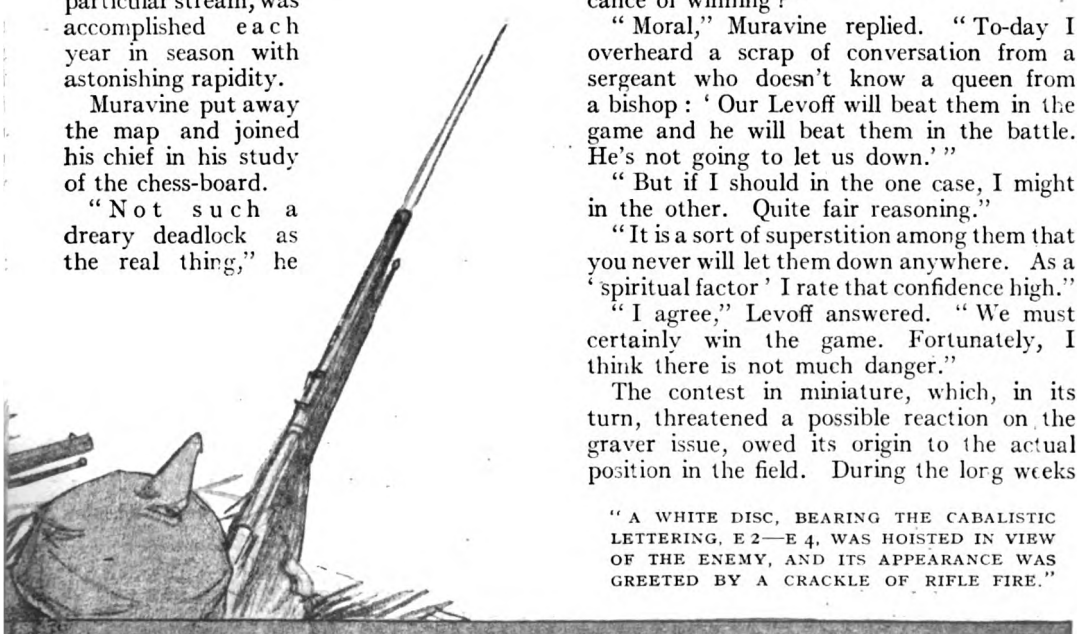
"Moral," Muravine replied. "To-day I overheard a scrap of conversation from a sergeant who doesn't know a queen from a bishop: 'Our Levoff will beat them in the game and he will beat them in the battle. He's not going to let us down.'"

"But if I should in the one case, I might in the other. Quite fair reasoning."

"It is a sort of superstition among them that you never will let them down anywhere. As a 'spiritual factor' I rate that confidence high."

"I agree," Levoff answered. "We must certainly win the game. Fortunately, I think there is not much danger."

The contest in miniature, which, in its turn, threatened a possible reaction on the graver issue, owed its origin to the actual position in the field. During the long weeks



"A WHITE DISC, BEARING THE CABALISTIC LETTERING, E 2—E 4, WAS HOISTED IN VIEW OF THE ENEMY, AND ITS APPEARANCE WAS GREETED BY A CRACKLE OF RIFLE FIRE."

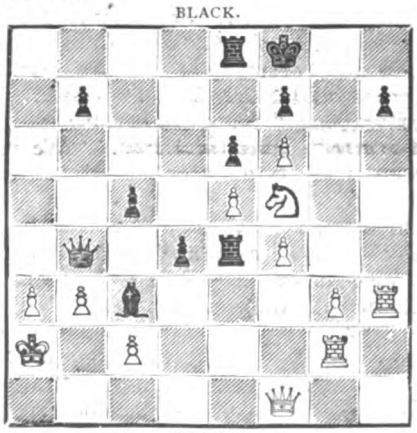
of enforced waiting in the trenches any device was welcome that might relieve the monotony and keep the men from mere idle brooding on their inactivity. Levoff was himself an enthusiastic chess-player, but his first attempts to arouse among his command an interest in his own favourite pastime had not been very successful, till one day, while wondering how the enemy was dealing with the problem of recreation, it occurred to him to throw out a feeler. By his order, a white disc, bearing the cabalistic lettering, in bold black, "E2—E4," was hoisted in view of the enemy, and its appearance was greeted by a crackle of rifle fire, as though it had been taken for an invitation to a display of marksmanship.

The following day, however, the signal "E7—E5," transmitted by the enemy in similar form, showed that the challenge, according to its true intent in the German chess notation, had been taken up. Pawn to king's fourth had been played as the opening move on each side in a game that was destined to have consequences of an importance entirely unforeseen. Thereafter, each day at noon, a move was signalled by the side whose turn it was to play, and the position on the chess-board developed a growing complication. Thus the fortunes on the mimic field had come to be related to those of the real strife by something more than the mere analogy of chess to war.

Levoff looked at his watch. "We ought to get their move soon, though I don't think they have got a good defence."

When, punctually to time, an orderly from the trenches brought the expected message, Levoff deciphered the move and made it on the board:—

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and win.

The two men looked at it, surprised and puzzled.

"Surely there must be some mistake," Muravine observed; "they can't intend to throw away their queen!"

"It is the move they have sent, at all events," Levoff answered. "And not such a bad move as it looks," he added, after a little further examination of its effect. "If we take the queen, we are mated in the corner—and with that wretched bobbin of yours of all pieces!"

He had lately lost one of the black rooks belonging to his set of men, and the "wretched bobbin" was a black cotton-reel supplied as a substitute by Muravine.

"Well, if we can't take the queen, why not attack their left wing as you intended? It seems to me that if we take the pawn with our rook, they can't avoid the mate."

"That is no good, either," Levoff answered. "If we take the pawn, they *force* us to take the queen, and the bobbin still mates. It is the same old German tactics—an attack in mass to break through the line at any sacrifice."

For an hour he pored and grunted without result, and at last declared an intention of clearing his head by some exercise.

"I wish you would have another look for that missing rook," he said, as he went out. "That stupid thing is maddeningly baulking when one is trying to think out a difficult position."

When he had gone, Muravine made a conscientious but vain search for the missing piece. Then the idea occurred to him to attempt the manufacture of some more plausible substitute. He was clever with his fingers and had some inventiveness. He began by cutting the right length of cardboard cylinder from an empty cartridge-case to serve as a framework. Then, having kneaded up with lamp-black the wax of a candle end to the right degree of blackness and plasticity, he modelled, with much patient skill, a surprisingly exact reproduction of the missing rook. "But for the difference in weight, I don't believe he could tell one from the other!" he exclaimed, with pride, as he placed the surviving genuine rook beside the counterfeit of his own creation. Then he replaced them on their proper squares to await the return of Levoff.

The latter noticed the substitution at once. "Good man! Where on earth did you find it?" He complimented Muravine on his skill, when he learnt the truth of the case, and resumed his study of the position with restored serenity.

"THE DAWN OF A HAPPY IDEA SHOWED ITSELF IN HIS FACE."

This time, either because of the removal of the little stumbling-block, or because the fresh air had really cleared his brain, his study of the board seemed to afford him a growing satisfaction. The dawn of a happy idea showed itself in his face. The smile gradually broadened. He began to move the pieces with an eager hand, and presently it descended on the table with a triumphant thump. "Got them, by thunder! Counter-stroke in their own best style of massed attack! Heavy casualties to us, but their left wing driven in and crushed, and the whole defence annihilated!"

He beamed with good-humour and satisfaction while he demonstrated the soundness of the winning combination to Muravine. "Your little masterpiece made all the difference." He picked up Muravine's rook to admire afresh the ingenuity of its

contrivance. "It only wants to be weighted to make it perfect."

"I can easily do that with some pellets of shot," Muravine answered.

But Levoff did not appear to have heard the remark. He seemed to have become suddenly unconscious of Muravine's presence. He sat perfectly motionless, the rook poised in one hand, and his eyes staring at nothing with the vacancy of one in a cataleptic seizure. He remained so long like this that Muravine laid a hand on his sleeve. The touch brought him out of his dream with a start. He got up briskly from his chair and pulled out his watch. "How long will it take me to get to Fedropol?"

"Fedropol!" Muravine echoed in astonishment. "I don't think a car could do it under three hours, and you couldn't count on trains for any part of the journey."

"I must have a car in ten minutes. Petrol for twelve hours, and plenty of rugs.

"I will explain to-morrow," he added. "I expect to return before noon. If not, here is the move we are to signal."

He wrote it down and strode out with a firm, purposeful tread, leaving Muravine to telephone the necessary orders and speculate vainly as to what could have moved Levoff so suddenly to a distant excursion.

Whether at chess or war, Levoff was never quite so dangerous an opponent as when his manner showed an expansive good-humour. Muravine observed the signs from the moment of his chief's return.

"Tea! Hot tea in buckets!" he cried, jovially, "and cigarettes, Boris; I finished my last twenty miles down the road."

His wants were soon supplied.

"And now, Boris, the map; and I will make amends for keeping your curiosity on the rack. I couldn't explain yesterday; first, because the idea that carried me off to Fedropol came too suddenly; and, secondly, because I couldn't tell until I got there how much it might be worth."

He paused to finish a cup of tea. "It all started from the enemy's last move with the queen. Just trace the chain of causation. He plays a move that puzzles me, and because I am puzzled I get annoyed at the loss of one of my chess-men. That leads to your contrivance, and that, in turn, to—but in this case the beginning is not the right place to start from."

He bent over the map. "Let us come back to our present military position for the moment. I think we agreed that it left us three possible courses."

Muravine assented.

"One, to wait in our present lines and trust to superior fighting qualities to defend them against the larger numbers; two, to fall back to here." He indicated a position on the map, using his cigarette as a pointer.

"That we rejected," Muravine interposed, "as being no better than where we are now."

"Then there remains your wild-cat scheme of a night march round the shoulder of this hill, and a sudden appearance on their flank somewhere about here." Again the cigarette did duty.

"That we dismissed because of our opinion that it *was* wild-cat."

"And our grounds for that opinion?" Levoff asked, as though to test the accuracy of his junior's memory.

"That, since it must be as obvious to the enemy as to ourselves that we dare not divide our forces, he would know, from the moment that we were disclosed upon his flank, that our present lines were left undefended, and he would sweep past them to here." He indicated a locality on the map. "Do you wish me to enumerate all the disastrous consequences?"

"It is not necessary," Levoff answered. "Now take the data we know the enemy to possess, and consider his reasoning from them. He *knows* we cannot get reinforcements; he *knows*, within narrow limits, our numbers; he assumes, quite rightly, that we shall not divide our force; he reasons that, since we cannot be in two places at once, we shall not be by the river if we appear upon the hill."

"Quite rightly," Muravine interposed.

"*Quite wrongly*," Levoff contradicted. "I reasoned yesterday that, because I saw upon the chess-board the lost rook, it was not at the same moment hidden away in some odd corner—and *I was wrong*."

Muravine caught his drift quickly. "A legion of scarecrows to deceive the enemies' eagles! And by what magic do you propose to transport your army of dummies without using your live men to carry them?"

Levoff picked up the imitation rook from the chess-board and repeated his action of the day before, weighing it in his hand as though it were a letter that might require extra stamping.

"That was where your contrivance gave me a second suggestion. If it could look so solid and be so light, why not extend the principle? The fault of a chess-man would become the supreme merit of a counterfeit army."

Muravine's face expressed scepticism, but Levoff continued: "If the thing could be done at all, it was Mirolosky who could do it, and it must be done quickly, if at all. Hence my sudden dash to Fedropol. I found Mirolosky, who, by the way, has almost given up scientific toys since he took to army contracting, and got him interested, with the result that one entire factory is at present busy with the production of a new pattern of toy soldier, not made of lead, *bien entendu*."

"Then you have definitely decided to attempt the operation?" Muravine asked.

"Unless, when you have seen our first recruit, you can show me some valid objection."

From a corner, where he had placed it on entering, he produced a long, thin parcel, and, when he had removed the wrapping of brown paper, revealed an object resembling a neatly rolled-up umbrella, but about twice the usual length and half the usual weight. He stretched a thin wire across one part of the room, about three feet from the ground, and clipped the umbrella-shaped article to it in a perpendicular position. He took out of his pocket what, from its appearance, might have been a metal drinking-flask, and, with the india-rubber tube of a bicycle pump, connected its screw nozzle with the other part of the apparatus.

Muravine followed closely, while Levoff, consciously perhaps, assumed the manner of a scientific lecturer demonstrating before a public audience. "The flask which I hold in my hand contains two chemical substances which, upon sliding this little knob with my thumb, will combine to the generation of a large volume of gas. This envelope is made of a material similar to that of the coloured air-balloons with which you must have been familiar in childhood, only very much tougher. I am now going to slide the knob, when the gas will immediately begin to inflate the envelope until, upon full distension, it assumes the appearance that, in a few moments, you will have an opportunity to observe."

He pressed the knob and the envelope began to stir slowly and bulge in places, shapeless at first, till, with increasing pressure of the gas, the miracle hastened, and there grew before their eyes the presentment of a Russian infantryman. Mirolosky, in a humorous moment, had, with a few deft touches of the brush, indicated a face, an addition entirely useless for the ulterior purpose, but irresistibly comic in its expression of stupid bewilderment. It had the appearance of a property doll from a Christmas pantomime rather than a serious implement of war. A sense of the incongruity overcame Muravine, and his merriment infected Levoff, till they staggered about the room in fits of uncontrollable laughter.

"To march against the Germans with that ludicrous monster! Are we a travelling circus, or a part of the Czar's forces?"

Their conference soon grew serious again, as Levoff explained the arrangement of supporting wires by which, with the help of the dummies, two men would appear as a line of twelve, or four as a solid square of more than a hundred.

He reverted once more to the map. "Remember that at this point, where our show would first become visible to the enemy, it would be seen through glasses, or possibly from the air. I am not going to take my dummies under a white flag to parley with the enemy at close quarters. Imagine the visual effect when machine-guns and other dummy trimmings are added. Do you think they will believe their own eyes?"

"I should think it was about an even chance," Muravine replied, cautiously.

"If the chance falls in our favour, his next move will be an advance on this position with all his forces."

"That I consider much more certain," Muravine assented.

"Very well, then. He will expect to find these trenches deserted. And he will. We shall be in concealment here and here. An hour later the position will be this, or something like it." He made some crosses and arrows in pencil on the map. "How do you forecast the result?"

"Checkmate," Muravine answered. "If you once get to that position it means annihilation for the enemy."

Levoff smiled a grim satisfaction. "I think our fellows could be trusted to do some pretty work with the bayonet."

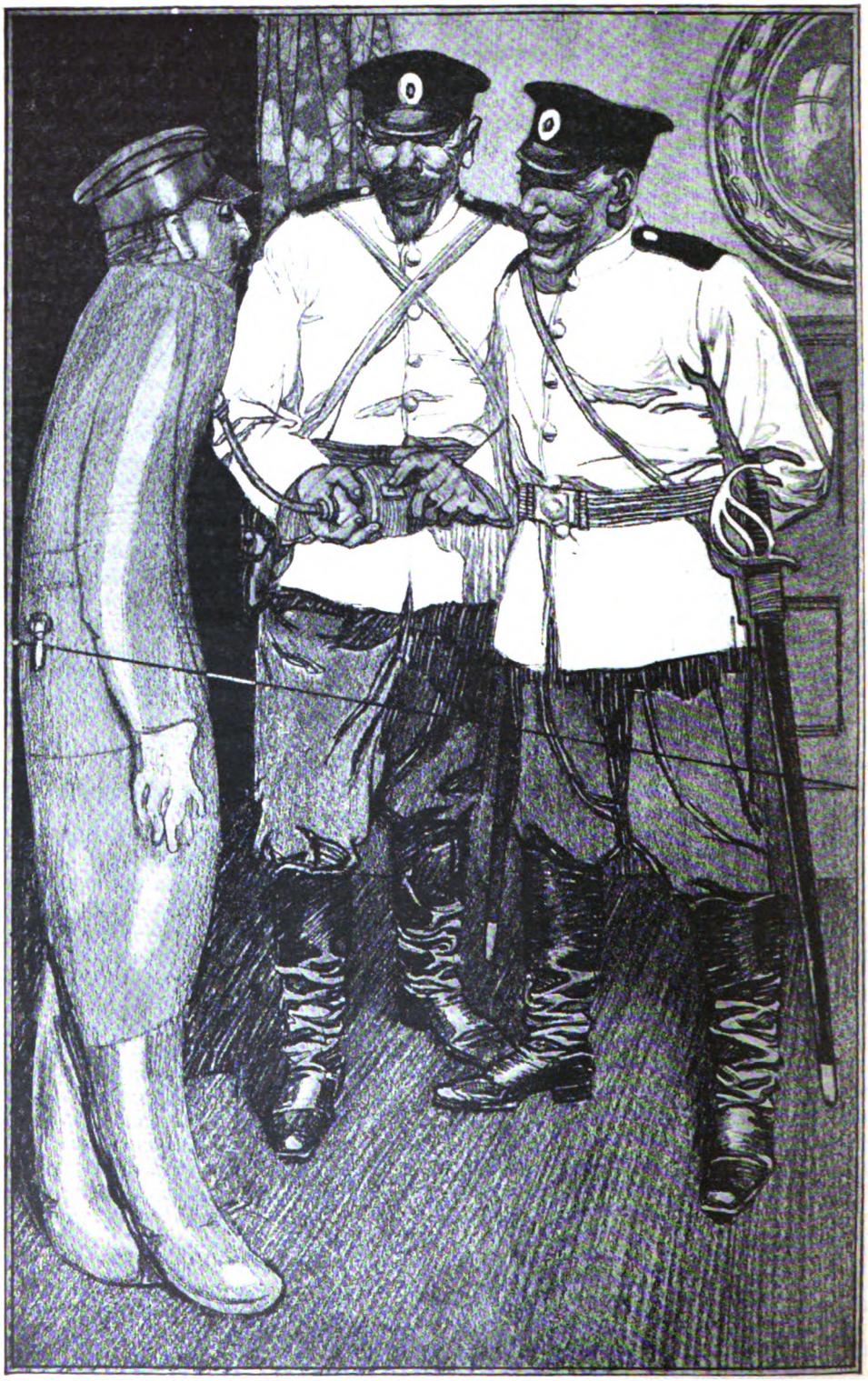
Muravine still stared doubtfully at the map.

"The element of the fantastic in the scheme makes you jib?" Levoff asked.

"Not so much that," the other answered. "I was only thinking that, for a serious operation of war, it seems rather a toss-up."

"My dear Boris," Levoff replied, "that is precisely its justification. It is 'Heads we win, tails we lose nothing.' If the ruse should be discovered, we shall fight at no greater disadvantage than if we had never tried it."

During the days that followed, a change revealed itself in the mental atmosphere of



"WITH INCREASING PRESSURE OF THE GAS THE MIRACLE HASTENED, AND THERE GREW BEFORE THEIR EYES THE PRESENTMENT OF A RUSSIAN INFANTRYMAN."

the force. The same occasions for boredom were present, but the boredom itself gave place to a quickening sense of expectancy. Though nothing definite was known among the ranks, and only a few knew the secret of the packages delivered from Mirolosky's factory, there was a general conviction that something exciting was in the wind.

Even the knowledge that in the chess contest (for this was no part of the secret) he had "got them" in a few more moves contributed, in its degree, to the confidence with which the greater issue was awaited.

Then the day came when Muravine reported that the subsidence of the river had begun in earnest, and a simple "For to-night, then," was sufficient order to set the well-oiled wheels of the scheme in motion. A stealthy evacuation of the trenches, a silent march in the darkness, and before dawn the most difficult part of the manœuvre was accomplished.

At their chosen point of observation, Levoff and Muravine lay stretched upon the near slope of a small mound, their field-glasses projecting just above the ridge. Every preparation was completed, and, for at least the next two hours, no more could be done. But long before that they would know the way it was going to turn. The next half-hour or so should settle whether it was heads or tails with the coin on whose throw their chances were staked.

Levoff kept his glass held with a steady hand to his eyes. A slight compression of the lips was the only sign of excitement. Levoff, who thumped and swore over the chess-board, could abide with silent composure the living issue. To Muravine the rack of uncertainty was almost unbearable. His face had never paled with fear, but it was white now in the anguish of suspense. His hands trembled as he unhooked his watch and laid it on the ground. His eyes shifted with nervous frequency from field-glass to watch, each time more anxiously, as the one still revealed no sign of promise, and the other an ever-dwindling store of precious minutes. Mentally he chose a figure on the watch-face as the limit of hope. When the long-hand passed that point, he would accept the issue as decided against them. The daylight grew fuller, and the pointer drew near the limit. He raised the field-glass for a last scanning of the distance. When he lowered it again, the pointer had passed the mark, and he closed the glass, to wait for a signal from Levoff that it was no use watching any longer. For another five minutes by the watch Levoff kept his glass fixed on its objective. Then he turned to his junior with a quiet smile: "It is heads, Boris."

Muravine's shaky fingers blurred the focus, but he saw enough. He dropped the glass with the light of coming battle in his eyes. Levoff lighted a cigarette and observed: "When you have left your opponent a fatally tempting move, the great moments are while he is making up his mind. When once he is committed, there is less interest in the last few moves that force the mate."

He looked once more through the glass and then replaced it in its case. A momentary expression of pity crossed his face, and he muttered softly, "Poor devils!"

Muravine winced slightly as he tried to move his wounded arm, but his pale face was happy with a deep contentment. Levoff's softened to a paternal tenderness as he looked up from the report he was writing.

"Shall we have him in here, or would it worry you, my dear boy? It will only be an hour or two before we get him shipped off after the rest."

"By all means bring him in here," Muravine answered. "It will interest me."

Levoff rose to receive his captive, and offered him refreshment.

"If there is any matter in which I can serve you, you have only to command," he added, with chivalrous courtesy.

The other bowed a grave acknowledgment. "I entrust my men with confidence to your humanity. For myself, I will ask one small favour. Tell me, if it involves no military secret, where, in the name of magic, you got your reinforcements?"

"From Fedropol; from the factory of Mirolosky and Company," Levoff answered.

In spite of his pain, Muravine had, out of decency, to turn his face away when the dummy came to play its part in the explanation, and Mirolosky's comic touches produced a faint, disgusted smile even on the face of the captive officer.

He inspected the imitation rook in its turn.

"On that field also I must hoist the white flag," he said, as he laid it down again. "That move of our queen did not turn out so well as we expected. As a matter of fact, it lost us the game."

"As a matter of fact," Levoff said, with slow emphasis, "*it lost you the battle.*"

(The solution of the end-game in this story will be given next month.)

"CARLTON."

"CARLTON" GROPING HIS WAY BLINDFOLDED THROUGH THE STREETS OF A STRANGE CITY IN SEARCH OF HIDDEN TREASURE.

THE BIGGEST NEWSPAPER "SPOOF" ON RECORD.

By "CARLTON."

Almost everybody knows "Carlton," the famous comic conjurer. In the following article he tells, for the first time, how he succeeded in hoaxing some scores of hard-headed editors and many scores of thousands of the general public into the belief that he possessed some species of telepathic gift that enabled him to find his way blindfolded through the streets of strange cities and retrieve small articles previously hidden in out-of-the-way places the situation of which had not previously been communicated to him.

THE idea of the "great spoof," the most colossal thing of its kind, I venture to assert, ever perpetrated on the Press and public of two continents, first suggested itself to my mind in February, 1907, when I was playing in pantomime at the Prince's Theatre, Bristol.

I was being interviewed by a representative of the *Bristol Times and Mirror*, and the conversation turned on the alleged telepathic feats of the Zancigs, then at the height of their popularity. The newspaper man opined that there must be "something in" the theory of occultism in connection with their exhibition; that they were possessed of a sixth sense, for example.

I hotly traversed this view of the matter, but eventually, after some further argument, I pretended to agree that possibly telepathy, or thought-transference, might afford a clue to the solution of the so-called mystery. This I did for an ulterior motive of my own, and in pursuance of a plan that was beginning to shape itself in my mind; for I do not really believe in telepathy, thought-transference, mind-reading—call it what you will.

Presently, in the course of the conversation, came the cue question I had been waiting for, and which I had gradually led up to, though without appearing to do so.

"Can *you* read a man's thoughts?" asked the reporter.

"Yes," I replied, boldly; "given certain conditions I can."

The reporter sniffed incredulously. I pretended to get huffed.

"Look here!" I burst forth, as though struck by a sudden inspiration. "In order to prove to you that I can read yours, I am willing to submit to a test; the most drastic, almost, that it is possible to conceive. You shall take some small article and hide it in any part of the city you like, and I will go to where you have hidden it, and find it. Moreover, I will allow you to blindfold me in such a manner that it is impossible for me to see to find my way to the spot where you have hidden the object, even if I knew where the locality was or in which direction it lay. All I ask is that you shall walk behind me and mentally direct me which way to go. You must fix your whole attention on the quest, that is to say, and exert all your will-power to guide me aright. This is all I ask. The rest is my business. There will be no word spoken between us, no questions asked or answered, and of course no personal contact. In fact, I should prefer that you remain always at some distance behind me; say, for instance, five or six paces."

* * * * *

The sequel to the above conversation came a week later, and as regards what happened I fancy I cannot do better than quote the report in the *Evening Times* of February 5th, 1907. It is, it will be observed, written in all seriousness, and it is perfectly obvious that the newspaper man who wrote it, and presumably also the editor who passed it, were as completely spoofed as were the thousands of spectators who witnessed the test. The following is the article, quoted word for word, exactly as it appeared.

FOUND ON BRANDON HILL

The Hidden Stylograph

IS DISCOVERED BY "CARLTON"

BEFORE 3,000 PEOPLE.

"Carlton," the expert juggler, sword swallower, and card manipulator, who is appearing in the "Humpty Dumpty" pantomime at the Prince's Theatre, claims at every performance that he is a marvel, and we are inclined to accept that estimate of himself after what happened this afternoon.

When recently interviewed by a representative of the *Evening Times*, the conversation turned on the topic of Zancig, thought-reading, and so forth, and "Carlton" thereupon claiming to have some knowledge of these things, undertook to walk blindfolded through the streets of Bristol and find any article that our representative might care to hide, and if he failed to do so he was prepared to pay £10 to any charitable institution that we might care to name.

"Carlton" imposed one condition only, and that was that he should see the article intended to be hidden. In the early days of last week our representative showed him a stylograph packed in pink cotton wool and a white cardboard box, and from then until this afternoon "Carlton" did not set eyes on it again until about two o'clock, when he found it where it had been hidden on Brandon Hill. Our representative kept his own counsel as to where he had hidden it and when he intended to hide it. Indeed, he secreted the stylograph in the axle of one of the wheels of one of the cannons on Brandon Hill, accompanied by no one, and last evening he visited the spot alone to note that no one had by accident or intent found or taken away the hidden treasure.

As it was feared that too big a crowd might assemble and interfere with the public traffic if the pilgrimage of search was started from our offices, we agreed to start from the Prince's Theatre at half-past one o'clock, and all that "Carlton" asked, after being blindfolded by Mr. Harry Thickitt, manager of the Bristol City F.C., was that the gentleman who hid the stylograph should follow him at a reasonable distance, and merely concentrate his thoughts on where the stylograph had been hidden. At half-past one, the time appointed for starting, the crowd outside the Prince's Theatre numbered well over 2,000 people, and as the tram traffic was being impeded the police asked that the start should be made at once, otherwise the crowd would have to be dispersed. Mr. Harry Thickitt, we are assured, was in the theatre at the time, but could not be found, so a lady who was purchasing tickets at the box office at the time kindly undertook the bandaging of "Carlton's" eyes with a dark blue silk handkerchief folded in ten thicknesses, and stitched together to prevent any slipping, the width of the bandage being about four inches, and completely covering the eyes.

"Carlton" was then led, amidst much cheering, into the centre of Park Row, and, after first facing towards the City, he reversed his position and walked in the opposite direction—first of all into a tramcar. The crowd was so dense, there were probably 3,000 people in Park Row at the time, his progress was rendered somewhat hasty, and, but for the intervention of the police, he must have been carried up Park Row and past the Bristol Museum before he had time to realize where he was. "Carlton," however, on reaching the end of Park Row, stood motionless for a few seconds, and then bore across the road in the direction of Berkely Place. Immediately a rush was made by the crowd for Brandon Hill, *viâ* that thoroughfare, but "Carlton" turned down into Park Street. Then he made as if to turn up Charlotte Street, and the crowd, surging round him, endangered some of the shop windows. Luckily no damage was done to them or to "Carlton."

"The Marvel," after proceeding farther down Park Street, turned into Great George Street, and here his pace slackened somewhat, and several times he placed his hand to his head, besides swaying in an undecided manner, as if he was doubtful where to proceed. He first made off as if he intended going the length of Great George Street, but suddenly breaking off he went through by Brandon Villas, and thus gained access to the Hill, with the assistance of the police and crowd, who more or less propelled him up the steps.

SEARCHING FOR HIDDEN TREASURE IN BRADFORD—NOTE THE BANDAGE OVER "CARLTON'S" EYES AND THE THICK PADS OF COTTON-WOOL.

When once on the Hill the task of "Carlton" was by no means easy, for even people who were not blindfolded found themselves slipping and sliding all over the place, and four times "Carlton" fell down.

His pilgrimage round the Hill was both tortuous and difficult, and at first "Carlton" went in the direction of Jacobs Wells, but retracing his steps he came back towards the City, and entering the walled-in space around the Cabot Tower, went slowly in the direction of one of the Russian guns. Having reached the one that overlooked the city he felt under the metal portion, and from a niche in the axle withdrew the cardboard box containing the stylograph.

Several people in the crowd shouted out, "He's found it," and at that moment the shrill whistle from one of the policemen on duty betrayed the fact that "Carlton" had swooned. The crowd were forced back, and restoratives administered to "Carlton," who on coming to muttered: "Have I found it?" On being reassured by our representative that he had been successful, "Carlton's" next query was, "Where am I?" and that, too, being satisfactorily answered, he was soon after allowed to return to the Prince's Theatre.

The huge crowd frequently cheered him, and when the avenue leading up to Park Row was approached, "Carlton" was seized and carried shoulder high to the Prince's Theatre, where he was called upon to make a speech, but smilingly declined.

Mrs. "Carlton," who had heard of her husband's collapse after finding the stylograph, was at the Theatre in a state of great anxiety, which was only relieved by his repeatedly assuring her and others that all the ill effects that he then felt was a slight headache.

"Carlton," with others, including Mr. W. Trigg, the well-known jockey, and brother artists from the Prince's, who had witnessed the search, were subsequently photographed at the Prince's Theatre, where the bandage that had been placed over "Carlton's" eyes was inspected by many people, all of whom were of opinion that no one could possibly see through it. Miss Sybil Arundall, who had the bandage placed over her eyes by our representative, was positive no one could see through it.

Superintendent Hassell had charge of the police arrangements, but for the very satisfactory character of which the experiment would have had to be abandoned, so great was the press of people.

"Carlton" took thirty-two minutes to find the stylograph from the time he started from the theatre.

Now, I should like to say here with reference to the above, that although the thing was a spoof from start to finish, so far as regards there being any question of telepathy or thought-transference, it was a spoof engineered entirely by myself, and off my own bat, so to speak. In other words, there was no collusion, direct or indirect, between me and anybody else connected with the affair. Nor, as a matter of fact, had I the remotest idea, when I set out on my quest, whereabouts the pen was hidden, nor indeed in what quarter of the city. In the circumstances, therefore, I think the reader will admit that the feat was, on the face of it, a sufficiently marvellous one.

I was blindfolded. I was in a strange city, where the streets and turnings I had to traverse and take were necessarily totally unfamiliar to me. Let the reader turn the problem about in his own mind, and try if he can reach any plausible solution of the mystery. I make bold to say that he will fail, as the good people of Bristol failed, and as many thousands of other people failed before whom I was presently to give other similar exhibitions in various parts of the world.

Telepathy was the explanation most generally tendered, both then and afterwards, and I have in my possession letters from members of the Psychical Research Society warning me against repeating the experiment, on account of the strain on my "psychic personality," which might, so they averred, have unlooked-for and dangerous results. That the ordeal I voluntarily under-

went was a trying, not to say nerve-racking, one was perfectly true. I felt it mentally and physically for weeks afterwards. Nevertheless, as I have already intimated, telepathy did not enter into the matter at all. Exactly how the trick was worked I shall take occasion to explain later on. Suffice it to say here that I afterwards spoofed the Press and public on the same lines over and over again, and never once did I fail in my quest, nor was the secret of how it was done ever elucidated by anybody.

I have performed the feat in Italian cities, and puzzled learned university professors, and before committees of professional magicians in India, Egypt, and other Oriental and Near Eastern countries, and these were deceived as completely as were shrewd, hard-headed Yankees.

Some of my hardest tests, however, have been undergone in England, in connection with certain of the big English newspapers. In several instances editors whom I have approached have been frankly incredulous in the beginning; so much so, indeed, that they have at first refused to sanction a public test under their auspices. This was the case in connection with the *Bath Chronicle*, whereupon I offered to give a preliminary exhibition then and there in the office before the members of the staff.

The offer was accepted. I was blindfolded with a thick, heavy muffler, folded in four, which was then tied tightly round my head, my eyes, moreover, being first covered with pads of cotton-wool, in order, I was informed, to make assurance doubly sure. This done, one of the staff, at my suggestion, took up a piece of chalk and started to draw a line from near where I was standing to whatever part of the building he chose. He could, I agreed, carry the line where he pleased, up and down stairs, into the basement, offices, machine-rooms—anywhere he liked, in fact. This done, he was to hide some small article at some spot near the end of the line, and I would undertake to find it. More than this, I told him that, provided he walked behind me, concentrated all his thoughts on the matter in hand, and willed me so to do, I would follow exactly the chalk line he had marked out, pacing along all its twists and turnings, until I had groped my way to the end and found the hidden article.

This feat I successfully accomplished, wending my way in and out among machinery—purposely brought to a standstill for the occasion—upstairs and downstairs, under tables and over chairs. As a result everybody was greatly impressed, nobody had any reasonable explanation to offer, and the editor promptly agreed to a public trial, minus, of course, the chalk line.

Accordingly he deputed a member of his staff to hide, "in some public place within two miles of the *Chronicle* office, some article or other." Strict injunctions were given that he was to let no one see him do it, and that he was not to tell a single person what he had hidden, or where he had hidden it.

So impressed was the reporter with the importance of his mission, I found out afterwards, that he waited until after dark to fulfil it, and sallied forth from the office so steathily, and followed so circuitous and lonely a route, as to convince him that no one could possibly have dogged his footsteps, or had him under observation in any shape or form.

The following day I underwent the test, and successfully located the article he had hidden. The report of the affair in the *Bath Chronicle* takes up about a column and a half, but as the main incidents are similar in their nature to those that occurred at Bristol, and which are fully set forth here, I forbear to quote it in its entirety.

I will reproduce, however, the concluding paragraphs, and I would like to direct the reader's particular attention to the words I have italicized, as I shall have something important to say about this particular incident when I come to elucidate the mystery.

After relating various happenings in connection with the earlier stage of the journey, the crowd that lined the route, etc., the report proceeds as follows:—

Reaching the turning leading to the Midland Bridge, "Carlton" crossed the road for a few yards, and then went ahead towards the bridge. He marched on, only halting once or twice, as his outstretched hands fumbled the side of the bridge. Crossing and recrossing the road, he went on, and the crowd was evincing the liveliest interest in the proceedings. Arriving at the end of the Midland Bridge Road, he turned sharply to the left, and after some manœuvring turned down James Street.

An Unpleasant Incident.

Here he walked into the wall on the left-hand side, his forehead coming into contact with the stonework. This accident loosened the bondage over "Carlton's" eyes, which was at once readjusted. This done, "Carlton" made for the direction of Green Park. He took the right-hand side of the thoroughfare, and for about twenty yards kept close to the railings fencing the Green Park enclosure. The explorer retraced his steps as far as the Park entrance gate, which seemed to excite his lively interest. His hand alighting on the handle, he opened the gate, entered the enclosure, and closely examined with his hands the stonework on which the gate is

hung. He was observed by the crowd to stoop down, feel along the ground, and on rising up was seen to be holding a pale blue envelope. Recognizing that the search had been successful, the crowd cheered heartily. On opening the envelope "Carlton," amid renewed cheers, displayed the bunch of keys which I had late last night hidden. He had completed his task in an hour.

A Trying Ordeal.

By the time "Carlton" had completed his self-imposed task perspiration was streaming down his face, and he had the appearance of having gone through a very trying ordeal. I myself felt the strain, for, on the assumption that my thoughts were guiding the blindfolded man, I had done my utmost to direct him correctly. Though no communication by sign or word of mouth had passed between us since we left the *Chronicle* Office, "Carlton," with slight deviations, had traversed precisely the route I took when I set out to hide the keys. "Carlton" told me at the end that I had given him a severe task by having selected a route which involved many turnings. "Carlton's" success in finding the keys contained in the envelope was the more astonishing to me as I had carefully concealed the envelope in grass.

"CARLTON" AFTER FINDING THE KEYS HIDDEN AT BATH.

A motor-car which had followed the crowd picked up "Carlton" and myself, and, after being photographed, we were driven back to the *Chronicle* office.

To me, "Carlton's" success was as baffling as it was surprising.

As a rule the articles hidden by those who tested me were comparatively valueless, and anyhow I was not supposed to keep possession of them after I had found them. But at Oakland, California, I was given a rather pleasant surprise. So cocksure was the editor of the *Tribune* of that city that I could not do what I said I could do, under the conditions he purposed to impose upon me, that he offered to hide two hundred and fifty dollars, the money to be mine if I succeeded in finding it.

Naturally, I was quite agreeable, and as the *Tribune* took good care to boom its "generous offer" beforehand, the crowds in the street on the day the test was to be performed surpassed anything I had before experienced. The police estimated that there were between thirty and forty thousand people present. The date was September 9th, 1911, and the dust and the heat were awful.

The individual chosen by the *Tribune's* editor to hide the money, and to "guide" me to it afterwards, was no less a personage than the Secretary of the Oakland Chamber of Commerce, one of the city's wealthiest and most prominent citizens, and a man whose integrity and *bona fides* were, of course, quite beyond question. By agreement with the Chief of Police, he had selected as a hiding-place for the bag of gold one of the police telephone call-boxes, such as are an institution in most American cities, and to which the police alone are able to obtain access by means of their private keys.

The particular box he chose was fixed to an electric light standard in a remote quarter of the city, and just before I left the *Tribune* building the editor received a telephone message to the effect that the money was still in the box where it had been hidden overnight, and that the key had now been placed on the top of the box, which was being guarded by a couple of officers detailed for the purpose. This information, however, was, I need hardly say, not imparted to me. In fact, I knew nothing whatever about the money, except that it was hidden somewhere in Oakland, and that I had got to find it.

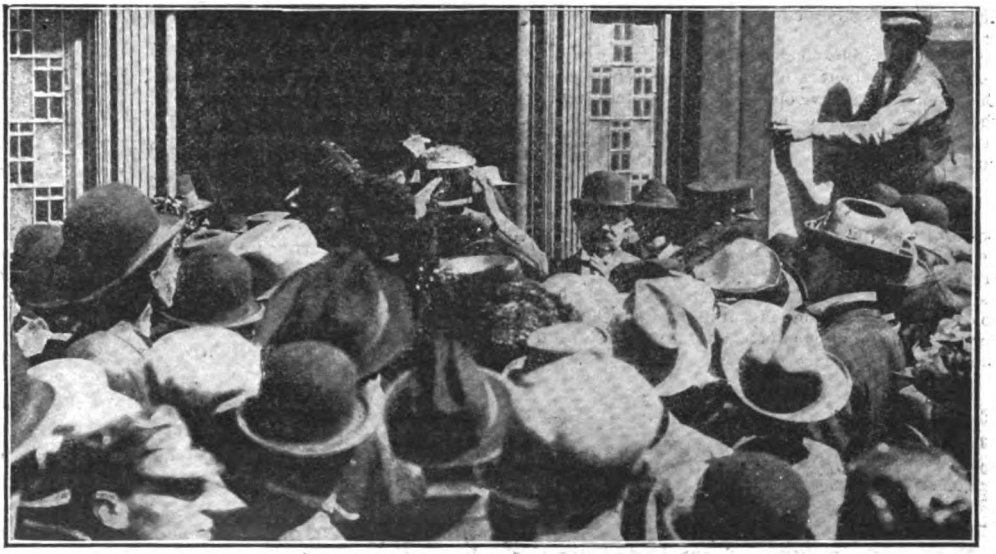
How I succeeded is told in the following report, taken from a special evening edition of the *Tribune*, which was selling on the streets within a few minutes of my having accomplished my task :—

BAG OF COIN FOUND BY "CARLTON."

30,000 Persons See Mind-Reader Discover the Sack of Gold.

Wonder-Worker at the Orpheum Wins $250 by Remarkable Feat.

In the middle of a hollow square and surrounded



BLINDFOLDING "CARLTON" IN FRONT OF THE "OAKLAND TRIBUNE" OFFICE—HE IS SEEN PRESSING THE PADDED BANDAGE WELL INTO HIS EYE SOCKETS.

by thirty thousand persons, shortly after noon to-day, at the south-east corner of Fourteenth and Broadway, "Arthur Carlton," the famed magician, who is nightly performing at the Orpheum in this city, blindfolded found a bag containing two hundred and fifty dollars in gold which had been hidden in a telephone-box at that intersection for the purpose of determining whether or not he was able to read the thoughts of the man who had there cached the precious metal.

The discovery was greeted with enthusiastic cheers by the thousands who pressed in on every side and who were prevented from raising the magician upon their shoulders only by a cordon of police.

Wins $250 in Gold.

The money was offered by the *Tribune* for the purpose of determining whether or not "Carlton" possessed the power of reading the minds of persons, which he claimed to be able to do. In the event of his finding the coin in the place selected for its secretion, the two hundred and fifty dollars was to become the property of the finder. There was a stipulation, however, that the money was to be cached by a man of standing in the community, who should be selected by the management of the *Tribune;* that the hiding-place was to be kept a secret by the representatives of this paper, who had been chosen for the purpose, and that the treasure trove should be conducted in the light of day and in the presence of every resident of the city of Oakland who might desire to witness the quest.

"Carlton" agreed to every condition and complied with them in a manner which showed him to be not only capable of mastering the thoughts of others without physical contact with them, but at the same time to be a consistent advocate of the science of telepathy, of which he is to-day the most famous exponent in existence.

Remarkable Achievement.

The achievement of this young Englishman has never been equalled in this city. This is the view of thousands of citizens who witnessed the accomplishment and who still retain the heartiest appreciation of the work in the same line of Bishop, Tyndall, and other workers in the same field who made reputations in this country about twenty years ago. It has been created by the fact that "Carlton" has done something which none of those distinguished advocates of thought-transference ever attempted. They were able to read the minds of others, but not without being in physical contact with those minds they were reading. The persons whose minds were being interpreted were required to hold the demonstrator by the wrist and concentrate their thoughts upon the subject which was to be illustrated or they were connected by wires with the operator and expected to centre their thoughts both upon the article hidden and the direction which had been followed in the secretion.

The following morning the paper gave up its entire front page to recording my achievement, and then, and for several days afterwards, scores of letters appeared from people who imagined, quite wrongly, that they had hit upon the solution of the mystery.

As a matter of fact, as I have before intimated, neither in Oakland, nor anywhere else where I have performed the feat, has anyone succeeded in finding out how it was done. Up till now the secret has belonged to me, and it has been shared with nobody else. I am now about to divulge it for the first time.

Do not miss "Carlton's" explanation of his extraordinary feat, which will appear in our next Number.

MOLLY DELANEY: NERVE-BREAKER.

By ALBERT DORRINGTON.

Illustrated by Graham Simmons.

I.

"IT'S the last time I'll enter the ring to hit a man, Molly. Let me gather in the stakes for this one fight, and we'll buy an orange farm in the San Jose Valley. I swear to you, dear, that I'll quit bruising for good!"

Billy Madison tramped up and down the narrow strip of beach in front of his training quarters at Point Hamilton, his brain alive at the thought of his coming contest with black Jefferson. Molly Delaney walked briskly beside him, for this was one of the mornings that trainer Muldoon permitted them a few moments' conversation.

The thought of Billy meeting black Jefferson had caused her many sleepless nights. For many years the negro had lived up to his Press notices as a human tornado. He had cake-walked through men's reputations as fast as the public provided gate-money. In the ring he delighted in cuffing a beaten man's ears or holding him up to the gibes and insults of the crowd before administering the final blow. Jefferson had made and squandered huge fortunes, and, despite the ease with which he secured his victories, his tendency to humiliate an outclassed opponent never relaxed.

Billy Madison had spent most of his young life at sea, among cargo tramps and whalers. With Billy fighting had become a necessity whenever Dago knife or Malay kris disputed his authority. He had worked in Canadian lumber camps and had quitted before his muscles had warped and lost their flexibility. The ring had called, and he found men eager to burn money on the negro's funeral pyre.

Molly's acquaintance with Billy began six months before he had signed to meet the black. He had been surf-riding on a plank, and the clean joy of the sport had fascinated her. Hitherto she had associated boxers with prehistoric types of ape-men and burglars, until Madison proved to her that modern fighting was a game of brains, and that only good-tempered, clean-living youngsters need apply.

Molly loved Billy. They met in the mornings on the open beach where the Pacific gulls drowsed and cried over the big verandaed training-house. The assistants who were preparing him for the fight with Jefferson found time to praise her sketches of him, for they knew that the bronze-haired Molly lived by selling her pictures to the magazines and newspapers.

She had seen Jefferson's portrait on the hoardings, and her woman's instinct warned her that the coming event would be a life-and-death struggle for her lover. The sight of the negro's oval skull, his simian length of arm, the great muscles that twined like roots about his huge limbs, struck terror into her heart.

"Billy," she said one morning about a week before the fight, "wouldn't it be better if you started a fifty-acre farm now and gave up this notion of meeting Jefferson?"

He stared at her in amazement, then patted her gloved hand tenderly. "If the boys thought I had that notion in my head they'd shoot me out of pity. No, sweetheart, we're going to make the nigger sprint for the first time in his life!"

Molly pondered his words for several moments. "Billy, dear, you couldn't hurt him with a barrel of razors. You are going to fling yourself at a thing that is blind to pain or shock. To you, with your white man's brain and nerve, every round and blow will be a crucifixion. You know the old saying that even the lion is as cheese in the grip of the anthropoid!"

Billy laughed loud and heartily at her earnestness, then kissed her as she prepared to go, telling her with much tenderness that his trainer, Muldoon, had ordered them not to meet again until after the fight.

Molly entered the railway depot at Chowder Bay, and for the first time that afternoon became conscious of a lank, grey-haired man

following in her wake. In the car he sat opposite her, and, as the train moved from the siding, coughed once or twice to gain her attention.

"You are doing pictures for the Sunday specials," he hazarded, in a low-pitched voice. "I am a journalist and like your studies of Billy Madison. They're alive, if I may say so, Miss Delaney. But it's about Jefferson I want to talk."

Molly would have withdrawn to another seat, only that his voice and bearing betrayed a genuine solicitude for her cause.

"I want Billy Madison to win this fight," she admitted, quietly. "What do you think of his chance?"

The old journalist smiled. "No white man's punch was ever big enough to beat Jeff. In seven years I've seen twenty Billy Madisons go joyfully into the ring after the nigger's scalp. Perhaps you've heard how most of them left their youth behind. Some got their hearts pulped and jaws broken, some had their brains affected, all to put gate-money into Jeff's bank. Why, it's nothing short of human sacrifice!"

"Please don't!" Molly gasped. "I'll try and get Billy to forego. It's horrible!"

He touched her sobbing shoulder gently, conscious that several people in the car were watching them. "Try your own little hand at smashing the nigger's nerve," he whispered as the train neared the city terminus. "Every man in this life has his fear—kings, presidents, and pugilists. One laughs at the surgeon's knife, but shrieks at a white rag in a dark passage. Jeff's got his own particular nightmare tucked away somewhere in his mind. He was nearly lynched once for one of his devilries down South. He's never quite got over his fear of the rope. They say he was hanging for eight seconds before the police broke up the lynching bee. Take it from me, little one, he's mighty scared of ropes. Think over what I've said and rot the beggar's nerve if you can!"

"Would that be fair?"

"As fair as his methods. He keeps men waiting in the ring until suspense and worry snap their patience. Then he has a gift of objurgation that fairly rattles a white man. Why, his idea of the game is in line with a hyena's. Good-bye, and think it over!"

In spite of her scepticism Molly was impressed. And since Billy refused to forego meeting Jefferson she was determined to find out whether the negro had nerves to break.

Jefferson's training quarters at Longreach was surrounded by a spacious veranda. The walls of the gymnasium were hung with portraits depicting Jefferson at various interesting stages of his career. There was a picture of Jefferson beating Mike Maffery at Denver City, and another of the black delivering the goods to another tried-out white.

Molly found herself standing near the bungalow entrance watching a thick-necked man promenade the veranda. Inside the doorway sat Jefferson, swathed in flannels, caressing a large bull-pup.

For a millionth fraction of time her mind oscillated between doubt and dread. She had conceived the idea of interviewing the negro in the interests of her paper. Drawing a card from her pocket, she stepped lightly to the veranda and found the thick-necked man barring her way.

"What do you want?" he demanded, abruptly. "You ought to know that this isn't a summer boarding-house."

Molly placed her card in his hand. "I'm from the *Sunday Sportswoman*. I reckon you've given all the man papers a look-in. Be good enough to allow a ladies' journal the privilege of interviewing Mr. Jefferson."

The guardian of the black champion's privacy grinned in sudden amusement. "My name's Tim Doherty," he said, after awhile. "You can worry Jeff for just five minutes, providing you don't talk politics. Don't you forget my name's Tim Doherty when you're writing up this interview."

Jefferson was rolling the pup under his soft sand shoes, his great hands pulping the dog's fat ribs playfully. He looked up slowly at Molly with the basking insolence of a champion in repose.

"Well," he declared, genially, "what's keepin' you awake at night, missey? Do you want ma picture?"

He settled back lazily in the low cane chair, the dog held between his knees. Never had Molly looked upon such a mass of inert muscle and flesh. She felt that by the merest effort of his long black arm he could reach her, even though she ran to the veranda end.

"You are looking forward to your meeting with Madison?" she queried, with an effort. "There is no doubt in your mind concerning the result, eh, Mr. Jefferson?"

He did not reply immediately, but she noted that his fingers closed involuntarily on the dog's throat. He looked up slowly, and she saw the white teeth inside the expanding mouth.

"Billy Madison ain't got grip enough to

chew candy. He's just chasin' the limelight, like all the other guys."

"Why do you hate white men, Mr. Jefferson?"

It was as though naked steel had touched him. He rose suddenly, and she saw the ophidian length of torso, the suave strength of his great body. He stared down at her thoughtfully. "A crowd of lynchers hanged ma father down on Skeeta Valley plantation fifteen years ago, missey. He was de best hoe hand and cotton-picker in Louisiana. I kin give you ole Colonel Stratton's word for it. Dey took an' hanged ma poor ole fader becoz a white man swore a lie against him. It was 'bout a woman, missey. After ma fader had been dead nigh on a year de whole flamin' lie was exposed!"

"They say you killed a man in St. Louis," Molly interjected, softly. She was anxious now for proofs of the negro's villainies.

Jefferson hunched his great shoulders. "'Frisco Joe, a blame half-breed Mulligan's backers squared to shoot vitriol into ma face, one night before a fight!" He paused while his big hands went out like a preacher's to the young girl before him. "Foh seven years men have tried to dope, kill, or poison me, missey. A blood-specialist in Chicago said he could provide me wid a kind of leprosy to kill ma punch if someone would persuade me into his operatin' theatre. That's the kind of talk I get for bein' honest!"

Molly shuddered.

"Dey shut me up in a State penitentiary becoz dey couldn't hang me once. But, by the Lord, I've smashed a white man's jaw for every week I slep' in jail!" he declared, exultantly.

Molly sighed. "Every blow you strike goes to the heart of some woman," she said, softly.

The negro's lips sagged suddenly, a soft filminess clouded the dilating pupils of his eyes. "I nevah hurt a woman. Ef a man climbs into the ring to pinch de gate-money I'm gwine to stop him, suah! Where's de woman, anyhow?"

"His wife, mother, or sweetheart!" Molly flung out, desperately. "I repeat that with every blow you bruise the heart of some unoffending woman!"

"DID YOU COME HEAH TO PREACH DAT TO ME? AN'—WHO FOR?"

"Did you come heah to preach dat to me? An'—who for?" He stood with his feet planted apart, his huge hands resting on his narrow hips. It was as though he had just battered an opponent to the boards and was asking a question of the referee. "Who for?" he repeated, hoarsely.

"*You!*" Molly assured him, with a set, white face. "Some night, in the ring, you will make a mistake. That right fist of yours will end a man's life—a white man's life. And do you know what is going to happen then?"

He stooped to pat the pup between his feet, and she noted that a gleam of moisture had come to his brow. "I reckon men have been killed in de ring before, missey. I got no time to worry over it, anyhow."

Molly's gloved hand touched his flannelled arm lightly. The contact of her fingers startled him like a whip-cut. His big, slack mouth seemed to squirm.

"In your coming fight, Mr. Jefferson, you will have the bad luck to kill Madison in the third round!"

His hands came up as though his legs had been shot away. For one terrible moment she thought the clenched fists would crush and batter her. She bent her head slightly and closed her eyes. Then his thick, sneering voice reached her through the swooning noises in her brain.

"I reckon Doherty ought to give you a nickel foh tellin' ma fortune, missey. You don't happen to know," he went on, with a hoarse guffaw, "how I shall come off after giving Billy his passage?"

Molly walked to the door, her hand pressed to her eyes. He saw that she was trembling violently, and his blatant self-assurance received its first shock.

"Ain't you goin' to tell, missey?" he called out. "I sha'n't sleep 'till I heah de whole story."

She faced him at the end of the corridor, lips parted, a swooning mist in her eyes as though striving to visualize more clearly some startling picture in her mind. Her voiceless concentration of manner quickened the animal curiosity in his eyes.

"You're givin' me de clairvoyant touch," he leered. "Cain't you answer?"

"Not to one who scoffs at his own destiny." Her voice sounded far away, but each faint word was a hammer-stroke on his wire-drawn nerves. His bulging eyes sought to follow her line of vision until the tension loosened his tongue.

"I'm takin' de guff serious," he blurted out. "I ain't de kind of guy to turn down a bit of free information. But—say, missey, you cain't see me hittin' Madison a stiffener on Friday night. Dat kind of future business won't go. Say now?"

Molly stilled the wild beatings of her heart. At all costs Billy must be preserved from this fistic monster, who had never betrayed the slightest chivalry towards an opponent. She pressed her fingers over her throbbing eyes, and in the silence she heard the swift beating of the negro's heart.

"I see Madison's trainer with a doctor in the ring. They have failed to bring him round. The police are climbing over the ropes. The crowd has become a frenzied, howling mob. Seats and benches are torn up. Some more police enter the building, but they are powerless to hold back the crowd that are fighting to reach the ropes."

"Ropes!" the negro echoed, sullenly.

Molly's white face was thrust out as she continued her blind monologue. "I see you now, standing in the ring-centre. Tim Doherty and several of your friends are beside you as the crowd scatter the police and pour into the ring. Now—wait. It has grown dark, as though someone had switched off the lights. Wait—the lights are on again, but the ring is empty! *The ropes are gone!*"

"Huh!" The cane-chair creaked as the negro dropped into it. The dog whimpered softly between his knees. "That ain't all. What's the crowd doin', anyhow?"

"They are outside in the street, looking up at *something* swinging from a lamp-post!"

"G'wan; who's swingin'?"

"You!"

The negro sat very still in the cane-chair, sweat dripping from his brow. Dimly through the red maelstrom of ideas surging through his fear-shaken mind he heard the soft footsteps of Molly as she slipped away.

II.

THE evening specials drew attention to the fact that Jefferson was suffering slightly from the effects of over-training. But the civilized world thrilled as the hour of battle approached. Nearly all the seats at the International Club had been auctioned or syndicated at record prices. At five o'clock in the evening, exactly four hours before Jefferson was due in the ring, Molly stepped out of a taxi a few yards from Billy's training quarters.

His manager spied her from the window, and a frown of annoyance darkened his brow. "A sweet, clever little woman," he

said to an attendant, "but I'd give a new hat if she'd leave Billy alone until after the fight."

Billy was lying on a couch inside the big, airy reading-room attached to the gymnasium. At sound of Molly's voice outside he sat up, beaming and alert.

A scent of violets came with her; she carried a huge bunch for the marble vase that stood at his elbow. "How do you feel?" she began, arranging the violets in odd corners of the room. "I thought I'd see you just before the bombardment begins."

He laughed and touched her hands with his lips. "I feel that we're bound for the orange farm, dear. I've just had a sleep, and they were counting Jefferson out when I woke."

Molly looked eagerly at his clean, straight figure, the hard, pink flesh, the boyish elasticity of movement and poise. Yet her heart quailed at the recollection of the negro's overwhelming bulk.

"They say Jefferson is sluggish," she hazarded, her face to the window.

Billy shrugged. "He'll wake up to the music; but all through the fight I shall feel you calling, dear. His black fists will never hammer the picture of you from my heart."

"Oh, Billy!" She would have flung herself on his breast but for the manager's sudden entry.

"Remember, Miss Delaney," he said, warningly; "we've got to keep our nerves for the black tiger at nine sharp. Take a rest, Billy," he added, pleasantly.

Two hours later his big car took Billy and his trainers to the International Club. From ceiling to floor the building palpitated with its close-packed audience. It was eight months since Jefferson had trounced Kid Despard in the same arena, and the savage yearning to see him at grips with the lightning-charged Madison swept over the crowd like an epidemic.

Billy's entry into the ring elicited a hurricane of cheers and greetings from the rows of upturned faces.

"Keep your head, Billy; don't let him guy you."

"Give him the double-punch where he sneezes."

Jefferson's appearance roused small enthusiasm. Billy's record was too clean to permit of counter-demonstrations. Although the crowd had often laughed at the negro's antics, they had come to see Madison win.

Near the ring-side, a boy's overcoat buttoned tightly about her, a soft hat drawn over her eyes, Molly sat through the opening formalities with the courage of a gladiator's wife. She heard the buzz of a gong, the quick patter of feet, and the suppressed grunt of joy from the gaping thousands as the two champions crossed the ring. Jefferson's grin had more nerves in it than merriment. His face bore the impress of sleepless nights, while his eyes betrayed a lack of concentration in their quick, shifting glances at the audience. But, true to the old habit of guying an adversary, he spread out his huge, spatulate hands and essayed a cake-walk across the ring.

With the dropping of his hands came Billy's lightning rush, a quick, chopping blow on the half-turned jaw that turned the Gaby glide into an ugly stumble for recovery.

"Try Billy with a hen-walk!" a jeering voice called out. Jefferson swung round, his long body swaying rhythmically to the cries of the audience. With splendid ease, his long left stabbed and coiled as though trying to catch and twist Billy's arm out of joint. His anger sharpened at the other's clever evasions, while his python body poised itself for a smashing delivery.

It came, and Billy endured for thirty seconds a whirlwind of savage rushes and upper-cuts. Molly closed her eyes. Nothing human could outlive the storm of blows that fell about her lover's head and body. When the gong sounded "corners," she looked up with ashen lips at the flash of blood on Billy's cheek.

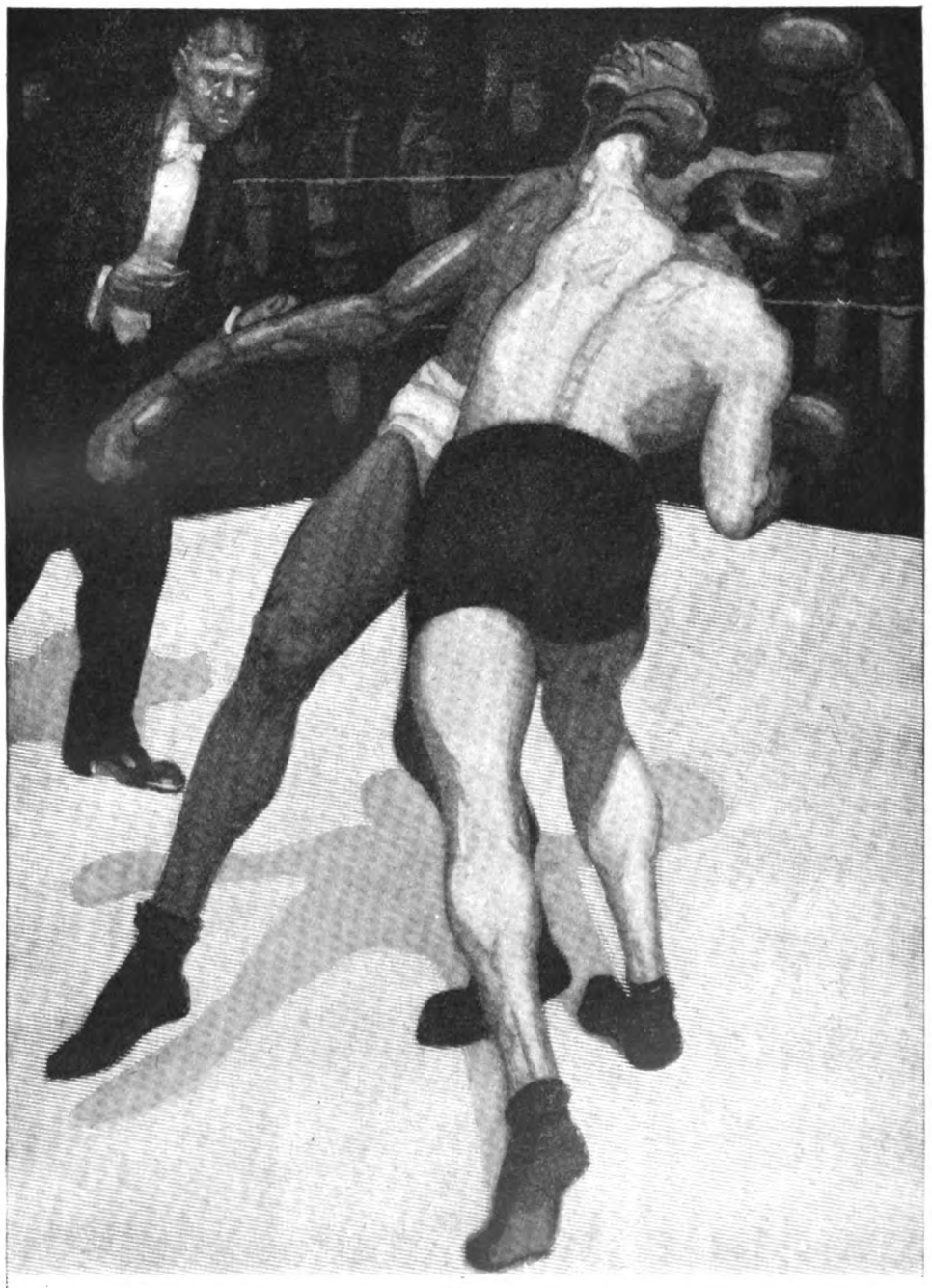
The negro slouched to his chair, grinning, but out of breath. "It's goin' to be red, suah," he guffawed.

Billy rested, and his breathing was slow and deep. At the call he left his chair lazily as the negro floated *à la Tango* towards him. A hoarse peal of laughter greeted the negro's gyrations. Billy appeared amused and dropped his guard, but in the millionth fraction of a thought his young body dashed in under the pirouetting arms. Molly heard two thick sounds, as though someone were battering wood with a maul. She saw Jefferson reel and recover, heard his trainer call out softly:—

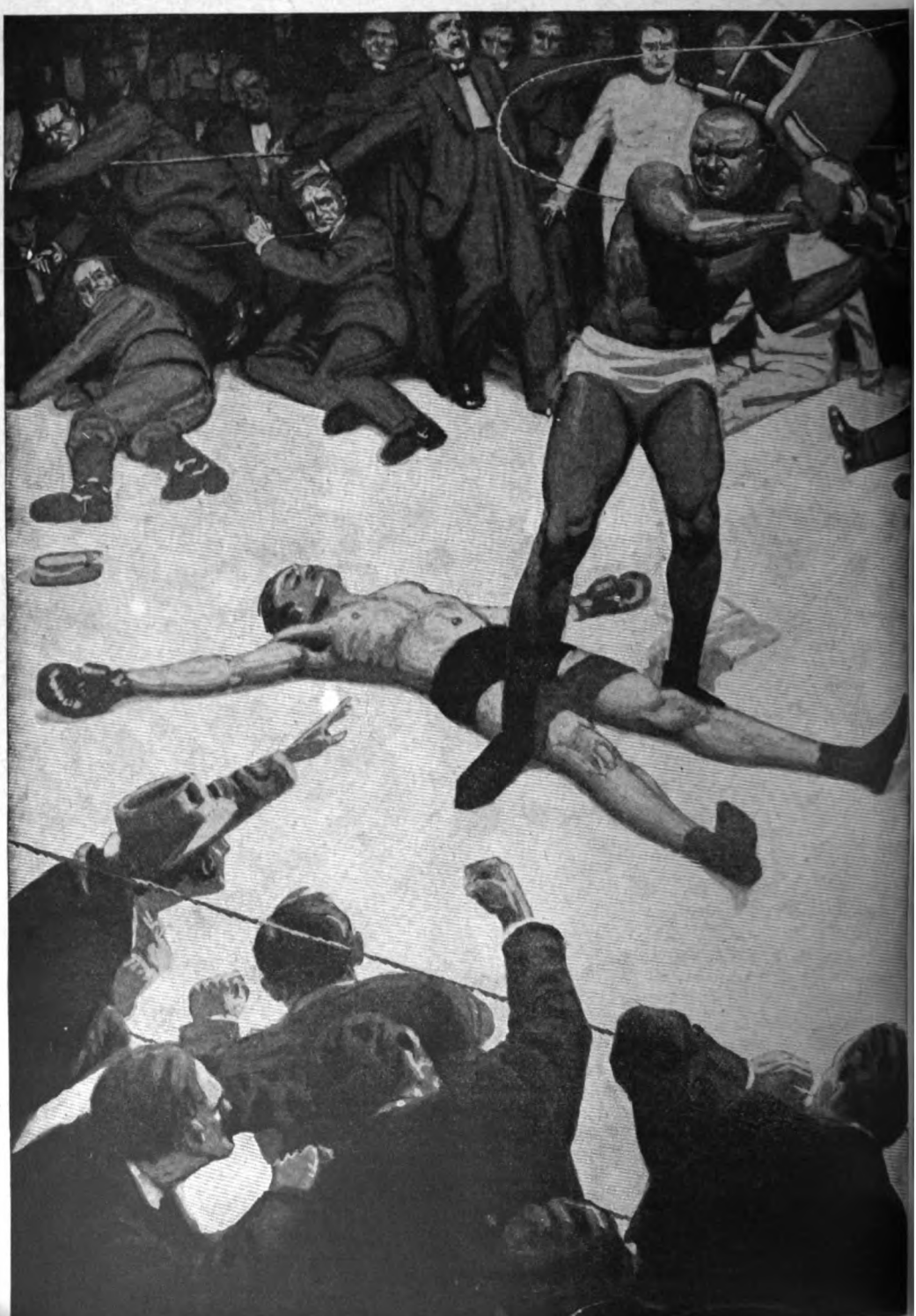
"Steady with that funny business. He's getting you!"

A man seated beside her said: "Two on the jaw and heart. Jeff will be growing daisies under his feet shortly!"

Jefferson steadied himself and shook sweat from his brow. For the first time in his career he had been caught in his fooling. He was now compelled to follow about the ring

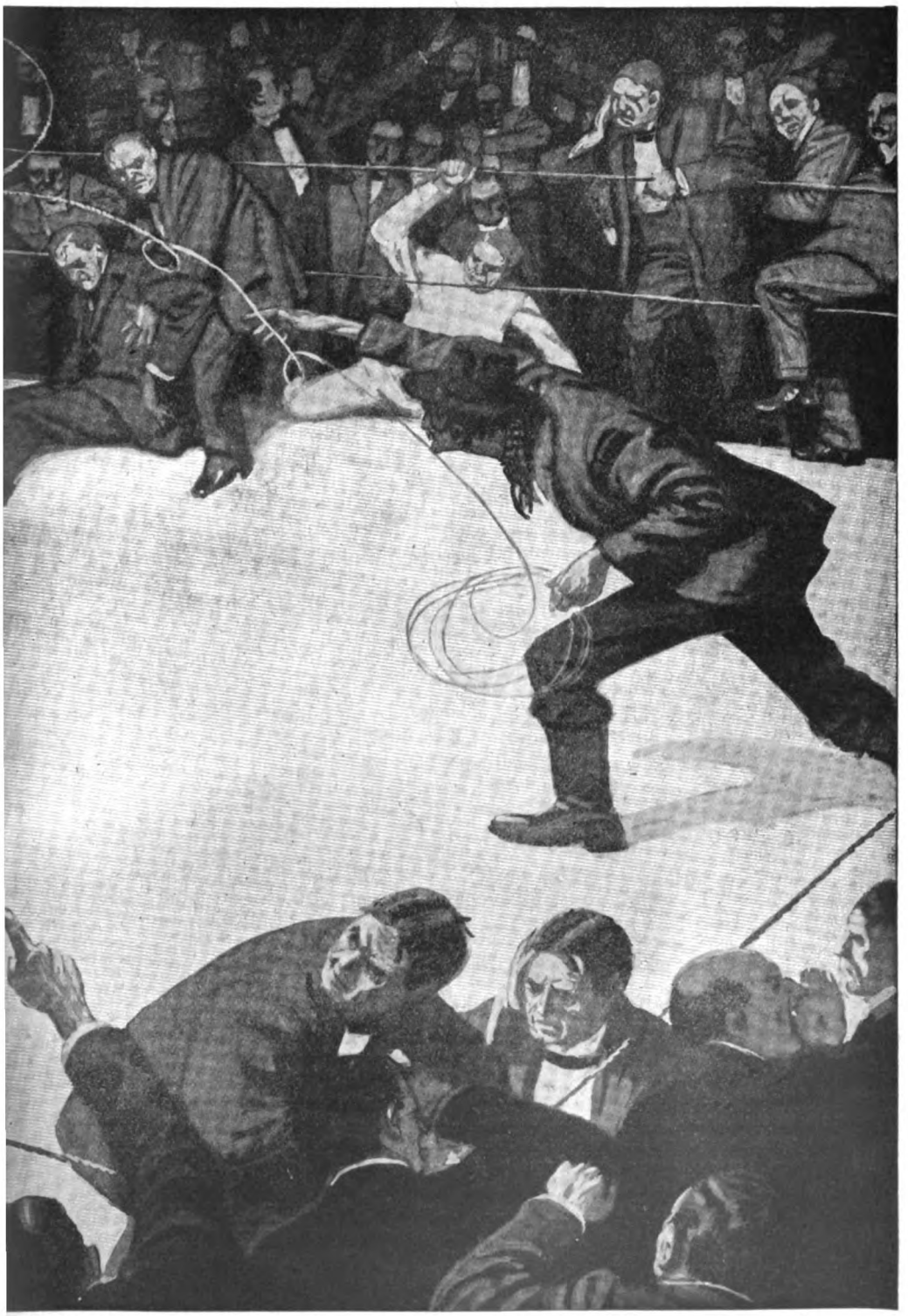


"IN THE MILLIONTH FRACTION OF A THOUGHT HIS YOUNG BODY DASHED IN UNDER THE PIROUETTING ARMS."



"A LONG-LIMBED WESTERNER HAD CRAWLED UNSEEN UNDER THE ROPES, A COILED LARIAT

"A LONG-



ON HIS ARM. SOUNDLESS AS A BIRD, IT LOOPED THE AIR ABOVE THE SWINGING CHAIR."

a man whose science and footwork were greater than his own. Molly's courage vaulted high at sight of the negro limping to the offensive. Yet something in the electric stillness warned her that her lover's fate lay in a false step, or the ill-timed swing of an arm.

It came like a thunder-clap. The negro seemed to cover Billy with his whirling hands. For an instant both clinched, and then leaped apart, at the referee's warning, only to meet in the ring-centre, Billy's right fist slamming with trip-hammer force against the slanting chin. Jefferson half-turned, and Molly saw his black elbow crash into her lover's face.

The effect was instantaneous. Billy pitched forward into a huddled heap almost at the referee's feet.

Pandemonium followed. Cries of "Foul!" and "Beast!" seemed to shred Molly's nerves. A thousand faces and fists shouted and threatened the stiff-limbed negro. A struggling, swaying mass of human beings sought to clear the barriers and chairs which separated them from the ring.

"Pulp the brute! Give him a bullet!"

Jefferson stared at the huddled-up white man, his knees trembling violently. Then he turned to the yelling avalanche of men, sweeping in hundreds to the ropes, and his eyes seemed to whiten in his rage and apprehension.

Snatching a chair from a near assistant, he leaped at the line of heads and shoulders clambering over the ropes. The chair was of seasoned hickory, built to bear the strain of exhausted heavy-weights, and it clove and brained the ring-rushers where they hung from the ropes.

With lunatic ease the negro sprang like a tiger at the encircling mob. Sticks and hands sought to trip his feet, but the flailing chair smote and scattered them in dozens.

A couple of firemen cleared the ropes and charged boldly at his legs and throat. Jefferson pivoted with the ease of a schoolboy, and the chair fell with a "whoop", on the near fireman's neck. The second invader gripped the chair-legs with both hands, calling on the crowd to close in.

The negro's bared teeth were visible for an instant. Dropping the chair, he struck savagely at the fireman's shouting face. In the turn of a foot he was back again in the ring-centre, fighting with both hands, the blood-mist of insanity in his eyes, a slaver of foam on his drawn lips.

Molly prayed for strength to keep her from the fainting fit that would put her under the heels of the stampeding audience. Men crawled from the ropes with gashed heads and broken limbs. A sudden quiet fell upon the hall; for a breath-giving pause the negro stood over the inanimate Billy Madison, the chair swung high.

Molly staggered blindly to the ring steps, her arms outstretched. "Don't—Mr. Jefferson! He fought straight. He's my boy. Don't, oh, don't strike him, for pity's sake!"

The negro glared, white-eyed, a big crucified grin on his slavering mouth. "Huh! You told me dis stunt! You showed me de blood an' de rope! An' ye tink I'm goin' to let 'em hang me!"

A long-limbed Westerner had crawled unseen under the ropes, a coiled lariat on his arm. Soundless as a bird, it looped the air above the swinging chair. It fell and was jerked tight about Jefferson's body. A short, quick heave brought him with a flying run to his knees. A second later the ring was filled with police and trainers, while the negro strained and cursed the fatal loop that gripped his arms and chest.

The swift-moving Molly was first to raise Billy's head from the floor and press her warm fingers to his faintly beating heart.

III.

THE morning after the fight, Billy Madison sat up in his bungalow-chair and yawned with great deliberation. "I thought someone had straightened my chin with a gun-butt," he announced, pleasantly. "I'll never forgive myself for letting it happen."

"It really looked as though the brute had finished you," his manager intimated, thoughtfully. "It was the worst case of fouling ever put up. Anyway, we get the winner's share of the gate—about thirty thousand dollars in all—to say nothing of the picture rights, which will prove a Golconda. The movies, showing Jeff batting Gehenna out of the crowd, will pay big divvies for a year or more."

A silence fell between manager and pugilist that was broken only by the low thunder of surf on the beach outside. Muldoon cleared his throat and continued.

"I know that Miss Delaney wants you to quit the ring, Billy, especially after what happened last night. But between you and me, there's half a million of money for you to pick up at the game. Jefferson is in hospital, and his recovery is doubtful. Anyhow, he'll never climb into another ring if the police know it. I had an offer from

Mallahan's backers this morning. If you care to meet him in three months' time there's another thirty thousand guaranteed. What do you say?"

Billy squirmed in his seat and then turned with a suppressed cry to a white sun-bonnet crossing the bungalow veranda. In a flash he was outside, his hands holding Molly's, his slightly bruised face turned away. She touched it gently with her gloved finger, a little sympathetic shudder passing over her. A moment later he detected a malicious smile gathering about the corners of her mouth. Instinctively his glance turned to her left hand.

A big red orange lay in her palm. He flushed, and his eyes dropped under her searching scrutiny.

"Billy," she said, gently, "your manager has been swelling your head this morning. He's been relating how the world is a ball at your feet, and that it's yours to kick whenever you want a sackful of money?"

Billy flushed a deeper scarlet. "He's got an offer for me to meet Mallahan. And I must say, dear," he went on, hesitatingly, "it looks like throwing money away to quit the game now."

In a fraction of time Molly had made up her mind. With her usual insight she divined what life would be for her if his growing ambitions were fostered. Fresh contests would be engineered in his and Muldoon's interests, while she would be placed in a new hell of torment and suspense each time he entered the ring. She could not live to see him broken and battered, his mind affected, probably, by the savage aftermath of each encounter. No; she had learned something of her power in her interview with Jefferson. If Billy was to be saved from the lure of the ring she must correct the pride of prowess that was hourly destroying him.

"Billy," she began, softly, "do you know why Jefferson went to pieces in the second round?"

His shoulders flinched. "You saw the fight, dear, and you know that my rush took him unawares."

"Billy"—she patted his bruised cheek affectionately and drew him cleverly out of Muldoon's hearing—"a week ago I set out to break Jefferson's nerve so that you'd have a chance!"

"Molly!" His hand closed on hers, and the pain of his grip almost made her cry out.

She held herself bravely, her eyes staring into his soul-depths. "I interviewed Jefferson at some risk to my own sensibilities. As a girl," she went on, with a tremor in her voice, "I used to earn four dollars a week in a lady clairvoyant's flat. I saw at once that Jefferson was just a big heap of muscle and superstitions. I gave him a mental picture of the fight with you. I told him that he would kill you in the third round with a blow from the right arm. Of course, it was pure guess-work on my part!"

Billy groaned and covered his face; a dry sob seemed to shake and rend him.

Molly held to her task. "I had to break him to save you, Billy. And I came near to the ghastly truth when I predicted that Jefferson would be hanged from a lamp-post. I left him in a sweat of terror, and the terror stayed with him until he entered the ring. I thought, of course, that it would be my first and last attempt to save you from the clutches of a human beast against whom you had no possible chance. But I find," she added, with a touch of bitterness, "that it has only served to keep you in the business!"

"Heavens, Molly, is all this true?" he flung out.

"As true as Jefferson is a babbling nerve-wreck. Moreover, my dear Billy, I've just received a special assignment on the *Morning Star* at a hundred dollars a week. And I'm not inclined to turn it down for the mere privilege of becoming a bruiser's wife!"

Billy Madison took three steps along the bungalow veranda, and in the turn of an eye she saw how she had rent and crucified his vanity. He turned slowly and held out both hands, his voice quivering and broken.

"Molly, let me meet Mallahan. Just to prove——"

"That you are the best white man living! No, Billy; my assignment won't wait. Good-bye, Billy. I must return to town at once!"

She tripped lightly down the veranda steps, a tiny bunch of half-dead violets pressed to her lips. Madison caught his breath as though a big white wave had smothered him.

"Molly!" He ran down the steps and caught her fiercely in his arms. "I was a coward to think of breaking my word. I'll quit the game, dear—I'll quit. Please let's go on the beach now, and—and——"

"What, Billy?"

"Eat that big red orange in your hand. We'll go farm-hunting to-morrow."

"The Billy boy has a lot of sense for his years. But he must not kiss me again, because there's a crowd of reporters coming this way."

The BEST ACROSTICS.

By H. CUTHBERT SCOTT.

THE best acrostics ever written? Which are they? And, Who is to select? Fortunately the present writer has not to decide such a difficult question. If he had to discover the answer to a similar query, "Which is the best poem by some certain author?" he might obtain the opinions of that author himself, of his publisher, and of some few of the author's readers and admirers. Here a similar course has been followed; advice has been asked of the acrostic writers themselves, of the acrostic editors who have published so many acrostics, and of several solvers who delight in such things, and are experienced and competent to judge.

Acrostic writing, as a literary artifice, is as old as literature itself. Several of our poets have written acrostic verses; but acrostics, written as puzzles requiring solution, are a modern pastime. Lewis Carroll wrote a few, and two of them are included in "Four Riddles," published with his "Phantasmagoria." He insisted that an acrostic should be a connected poem, and not a string of disjointed stanzas; but all acrostic editors hold the contrary view. Occasionally such connected acrostics have been published—instances can be found in the *World* and the *Lady*—but they have rarely proved satisfactory, and practically never excellent. After all, the acrostic that can range over every field of knowledge has more chance of proving a good one, though the genius of Lewis Carroll may produce the other kind in perfection.

At the present time some seven or eight London papers have an acrostic column; they are very ably conducted, and show high literary and artistic merit, while all seem to have distinct individualities of their own, being run on somewhat different principles. In point of age the *Queen* takes precedence. The first acrostic was published towards the end of the 'sixties, and the series has been continued since. In 1874 the *World* was born; an acrostic appeared in its first number, and none of the succeeding issues has been without one. No. 2,164 should appear in No. 2,164 of the *World*, published on December 21st.

The *Ladies' Field* and the *Daily Telegraph* began to publish acrostics about the same time, some sixteen years ago, and have always found them a popular feature; indeed, the sudden rise of the *Daily Telegraph* acrostics to fame at the beginning of this century was one of the most notable events in acrostic journalism. The *World*, with its "Diamond Jubilee" acrostics and one hundred pound prize, had started the boom in what had always been one of its most popular features; seven hundred and seventy-one solvers sent in answers to the first acrostic, while it would be futile to guess how many attempted them and did not send in answers. But the *Daily Telegraph* had, within two years of the publication of its first acrostic, over a thousand competing solvers. One result of this excessive popularity has been that the *Daily Telegraph* has been compelled to publish exceedingly difficult acrostics at times. The acrostic editor has been occasionally forced, as he puts it, "to sacrifice the æsthetic element to the stern necessity of winding up a competition and evolving a few winners from many hundreds of competitors." But the sacrifice has occurred only occasionally; most of the acrostics have been excellent, and the difficulties full of interest.

An excellent instance of an acrostic that is difficult, but should not have been insoluble, is No. 1:—

No. 1.

Through longest reign unshaken still,
"Broad-based upon a people's will."

1. One of "uncouth distorted train
Drifting in mazes o'er the plain."

2. Soft note of wonder, doubting too,
And yet the light is plain to view.

3. One line in two may here be found
Where good and ill alike abound.

4. The tar created it—its fame,
However, from the soldier came.

5. Who finds him out won't care a pin
If he himself is taken in.

6. What, made in Germany! Not so
Who sees these lines must answer "No."

7. It is the hour for lovers' vows,
And not too late the saint allows.

8. Last comes my Uncle, quite the swell—
Not he who on the "Mont" doth dwell.

PEN.

It appeared in the *World* of May 5th, 1897, in the "Diamond Jubilee" series. The uprights, "A Limited Monarchy," are fairly clear, all the lights are clever, and one or two of them difficult, especially the first, and it may be that this quotation light was the reason why no one solver was able to solve the whole acrostic. "Pen" wrote the best acrostics of any that have appeared, not only in the *World*, but in any other paper. This will be conceded, the present writer thinks, by the admirers of "L'Abbé" (the *World* of an earlier generation), "Xaintu" (the *Queen*), and "Aaron" (the *Queen*, the *World*, and the *Court Journal*), who, with the anonymous acrostic editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, form a class only a degree less eminent. The following, No. 2, was another difficult acrostic written by "Pen"; it was published in 1898:—

No. 2.

Above the gloomy pool it lowers;
Business and sport divide the hours.

1. A serious charge this might denote,
Or else a period most remote.

2. Abductor's home, upon whose sod
Never again in life he trod.

3. Begun in error, closed in love,
A widespread cause of death to prove.

4. This light is for the candid friend,
Who may about himself contend.

5. Don't call her by her Christian name,
She who has wrought such deeds of shame.

6. "O mater pulchra," this is you;
Your "filia pulchrior" will not do.

PEN.

The author was an Irishman, and Irishmen will recognize the allusion to "Dublin Castle," but readers who do not remember the acrostic will find some of the lights difficult. The third, though comparatively easy to guess, is very clever, and the fifth and sixth are also ingenious.

About the same time appeared "Gutter Snipes," with its apparently simple proem not referring to the month at all, but to Phil May's well-known types. It is a clever and attractive acrostic, and by no means a hard one. Its author, "Digamma," has published a great number of acrostics in the *World*, at frequent intervals during the past twenty-odd years, and some of them have been very difficult. He himself selects this as his best; its language is simple and natural, and yet is so often capable of more than one interpretation.

No. 3.

Unsavoury subjects, whatever you say,
Though somewhat improved by the glamour of May.

1. Foolish themselves, they were the occasion
Of wise epistolary persuasion.

2. Though made in Germany, no doubt
Such being it is good to scout.

3. If Russians me should *count*,
Do they get a novel amount?

4. An Admiral should surely lead the van,
But here the van leads him. A quite Dutch plan!

5. This is to rival, in our rhyme,
A bird that's got behind its time.

6. Sweetly dear on bed or bench
To weary limbs—the rest is French.

DIGAMMA.

Yet one more acrostic may be quoted from the closing years of last century, that golden age of the *World's* acrostics. Lack of space forbids more, though it would be an easy task to find twenty that ought to be printed here. The author of No. 4 was an occasional writer, one of great charm and ingenuity, and one or two of the lights in this acrostic exemplify his felicity of expression. "Home Rule—All Round" was published on May 18th, 1898, and is one of the best of "Triumvir's" acrostics.

No. 4.

Pater, whate'er his politics may be,
Within his realm some good in this should see.
In Latin phrase, to suit the "*Mundus*,"
Totus, teres atque rotundus.

1. To call it mild but few would now desire;
The harmless smoke may change to dangerous fire.

2. A jaw-breaker—the rhythm is but lame—
Those in such science skilled resent that name.

3. Prince above princes, witness of affliction,
When called to carry out a sad eviction.

4. The cause of progress or of moderation
Mainly depends on his discrimination.

5. Driven from his rural home to town or city,
His present state excites our wrath and pity.

6. Of no account when wholly isolated;
But with an ally it is fitly mated.

7. What is your fare? With this for a reply
The chance of "Full inside" you may defy.

8. Of problems in the East he was a master
To shirk their study may entail disaster.

TRIUMVIR.

The *Ladies' Field*, at the beginning of its acrostic career, struck out a line of its own, and all of its acrostics had a decided literary flavour. Quotations and literary allusions were very frequent, and these acrostics were much appreciated by a band of solvers with literary tastes. But after a while fashion changed, and for many years now the acrostics have been rather of a miscellaneous nature than distinctly literary. Perhaps some day we may come back to old ways. The acrostic editor was unwilling to say which she considered to be the best acrostic that she had published, but the following one, which appeared in the *Ladies' Field* in June, 1902, has many merits, and proved very difficult. The proem alludes to the revival of "The Merry Wives of Windsor," when Ellen Terry took the part of Anne Page.

No. 5.

The Royal Borough's now so full of glee,
That not *these* wives alone must merry be.

1. Ah! In old days, with undergraduate brother,
We chanted it and gave it one another.

2. On solid ground philosophy should rest;
Here always flighty was its place at best.

3. River-side hostel aye for me has charms:
Could I this hire from "The Campbell Arms"?

4. He goes out kidnapping when he can find
A father with son in the night and the wind.

5. Of many aspects.—Her to define I summon
A Pedagogue who taught she was "a rum 'un."

6. He heard the wild "hourra!" his horsemen flung,
As wolf-like round retreating foe they hung.

7. No far Australia in her voyage she found,
Though fleeces there and nuggets, too, abound.

8. When we would laugh and shake in easy chair,
We take this "Jester and good fellow" there.

9. Had this light never shone upon his story,
Should we so well have known "the great one's" glory?

The selection of the best acrostic from those published in the *Daily Telegraph* has proved to be a very difficult problem, and it has not been solved with any approach to accuracy. Some eight hundred acrostics have appeared, all have been written by the same man, and he, while allowing the author of this article every other facility and every courtesy, has resolutely declined to arbitrate on his own productions. The acrostic editors of two other papers have both expressed the opinion that the best of the *Daily Telegraph* acrostics that have appeared as yet were published between 1899 and 1904. Two from that period may be taken as samples; they may not be the best, but they are very good, and one of them is very far from easy. It appeared in November, 1903.

No. 6.

Suggesting conjuration
Hit off the situation.

1. A curt asseveration;
2. A phrase of recusation;
3. Van too of ululation;
4. In frequent oscillation;
5. Just half a decoration;
6. A natural termination.

Lo, vain the permutation!

To illustrate the difficulty of the above acrostic, it may be mentioned that only eighteen people found the right answer, whereas one of the acrostics of the month before was answered correctly by eight hundred and eleven solvers. No. 7 was published in October, 1904; it is not so difficult to solve, but it is a neat and attractive puzzle.

No. 7.

I cannot floor you? Never mind,
Take this for that;
And truly this is that, you'll find,
You this in that!

One, two—one, two—
How far extending!

One, two, three—three—
Deception lending;

Three, two—two, one—
A song recalling;

And three—three, four—
For fear of falling.

Some very good acrostics used to appear in the pages of the *Court Journal*, and one of them is given here. It is the work of "Aaron," who some ten years ago gave up acrostic solving and prize-winning in favour of acrostic writing. His acrostics are of all degrees of difficulty—some of them have baffled everyone, some of them have been answered by nearly everyone—but they are alike in one feature, their lyrical excellence. Since Praed published his charades, no writer has clothed puzzles in such charming rhythm. No one who read his proems could help trying to solve the acrostics. Two of the best were his verses on the "Acrostic Editor of the *World*" (Dec. 23rd, 1913), and his poem on the Lord Mayor's Show of 1913 (the *World*, Nov. 11th). No. 8 was published in the *Court Journal* of March 18th, 1905; it is cleverly written, and though not very hard,

should provide pleasant exercise for a reader's brains.

No. 8.

You may *this* yourself, you may *that* yourself,
But when in the two arrayed,
Though probably smart,
You are playing a part,
That somebody else has played.

1. From first to last 'tis surely gone, but four to one you greet
As ditch, or very possibly a dish in it you meet.
2. Strange that this little creature, which we oft in water find,
Should have, if names mean anything, such an inquiring mind.
3. Obedience once was passive, it was said to be a joke;
And this was dubbed a jest; he brayed, that vicar, when he spoke.
4. From one to two miles long or more in distant East is this;
An algebraic quantity; and used to be a kiss.
5. Riding may suggest it, but it must be shortened here,
And should you hire it, you must not so let it now appear.

AARON.

Many of the same writer's acrostics have appeared in the pages of the *Queen* during the last few years, and of these he has chosen the one given here as representative of his best work. No. 9 was published on August 17th, 1909, and is one of the neatest sets of verses that have been printed in any acrostic columns. Its solution will not prove very difficult.

No. 9.

Consider the points, there are heads without hair;
There are eyes which no eyelashes frill;
And an ungallant proverb is known to declare
That in Benedick's troubles they both have a share
When he answers the parson, "I will."

1. "I'll sharpen my quill," Poet Smith cried with zeal:
(Says the Editor, "Nonsense! He writes with a steel.")
2. "And I'll *this* a few lines to my Cynosure bright."
("Why on earth can't the lunatic say he will write?")
3. "To liken her cheek to this fruit I'm inclined."
("But the peach has been used for that, time out of mind.")
4. "And I'll mention I always feel *so* when she goes."
("It is rarely he's anything but lachrymose.")
5. "I will call her my *fifth*, ev'ry poet so sings."
("Can her corset be made to accommodate wings?")
6. "And declare that her *sixth* is engraved on my heart."
("She will probably change it, at present 'tis Smart.")
7. "That her rank should be this, and I'll beg her be mine."
("As Smith isn't a Duke, I suppose she'll decline.")

AARON.

Another writer who has been before the public for some time is "W. B. C." His first acrostic in the *World* appeared in 1894, and since then he has written, on an average, some twelve or fourteen acrostics every year for the *World*, and also, of recent years, a fair number for the *Ladies' Field*. He was, too, at one time a frequent writer in *Vanity Fair*. Generally speaking, his acrostics are fairly easy, with an occasional difficulty thrown in; they are very varied, and require a good deal of miscellaneous knowledge for their successful solution. No. 10 is the one that "W. B. C." has selected as his best. It appeared in the *World* on May 9th, 1911.

No. 10.

"Upon the clouds" perhaps we may
"Fierce fiery warriors" see one day.

1. No halo, other light instead
Thereof shines on his sacred head.
2. In theatre devoid of actors
Commemorates one benefactors.
3. Beauty he gained in lieu of wit:
A wondrous wedding change was it.
4. Supplies it means of living, yet
Hence one may fail supplies to get.
5. A belt by human hand not made;
Looks as if something must be paid.
6. Thus is transpontine city named,
Which tells of creature fierce, untamed.

W. B. C.

An acrostic column has been a feature of the *Globe* on Saturdays in recent years, though it has been discontinued since the summer of last year. Many writers contributed to it, and one of them, "Pemb," known to readers of the *World* as "Lambda," has fixed on No. 11 as his best acrostic. It appeared in the *Globe* on May 18th, 1912.

No. 11.

When you're taking something dainty from a tin
With its fellows all securely packed within,
Ere you think to taste your gastronomic bliss,
Pause and ask yourself the question, What is this?

1. Help! O hear the urgent call,
Lest dire disaster on us fall.
2. A lonely castle, perched on lofty steep,
Where evil Count was murdered in his sleep.
3. Itself but one, it yet, as we maintain,
Itself in greater number doth contain.
4. Right to the end you needs must go,
If its equivalent you'd know.
5. Tho' not as a musician classed,
Wrote a sonata unsurpassed.
6. A simple shell that may, you'll find,
The fate of Romeo call to mind.
7. A trick that always takes us in:
Not you, if you the mark should win.

PEMB.

The *World* has always been fortunate in possessing a number of good acrostic writers, and besides those already mentioned there are at least three whose claims to be quoted here are incontestable. "Dot" writes about half-a-dozen acrostics every year, and they are always good; his best efforts of recent times have, it seems, referred to events in the bitter struggles of party politics, and, as they are decidedly outspoken in their author's views, it is, perhaps, best not to select them now; but the two following examples will show the neatness of his puzzles as well as the cleverness of his versification. No. 12 was published in the *World* of June 24th, 1913, and No. 13 in Ascot Week, 1914.

No. 12.

At first by her side he is eager to dangle;
And she has no need for caresses to angle,
She gives him a kiss, and he gives her a bangle,
The sunshine of love seems the future to spangle.
The honeymoon ends, and, their nerves all a-jangle,
Sweet harmony ends in a conjugal wrangle.
He takes to the pub, and she takes to the mangle.
A happier pair it may please you to fangle,
And help you to find a way out of the tangle.

1. Of such a monster may you never dream.
2. "No votes for women" ever may it hiss.
3. A bar to further progress up the stream.
4. A single story in a single line.
5. A *contretemps* in which a mark we miss.
6. A new one is as good as any nine.
7. The little lady is no longer mine.

DOT.

No. 13.

A party, a week, a procession, a stand
The title with classical dignity share.
John, Taffy, and Pat—in an alien land?—
Meet Sandy—aiblins wi' a bawbee to spare?
A jumble of humble-cum-quality brand,
The few to be stared at, the many to stare.
To deal with your future the gypsies demand,
And ever behind the gay jockey sits care.
Fortuna so fickle is waving her wand,
And losers are legion, and winners are rare.
A warrior welcome, the lilt of the band,
And "bubbly" awink in the wake of good fare.
Beware, ye who plunge, of a smash that is grand;
Good luck, all the same, to the gallants who dare.

1. The colour he sported was Emerald green,
   But hers would be surely a violent blush.
2. Who moted to races once had to be flush,
   But now there are cars for all votaries keen.
3. The head of our welsher is not to be seen!
   Our poor little flutter has gone to the .... hush!
4. To tell how some ran in the glorious rush
   A pound and a shilling may help in between.
5. So be it—poor gambler, what might it have been?—
   Philosophy found in a pitiful gush.

DOT.

The second of the three is "G. S.," always a difficult and elusive writer. It has never been easy to solve his acrostics, but, after a few years' experience of them, several solvers discovered that he was extremely fond of one particular book of reference, and the discovery helped them a good deal. It is a not uncommon peculiarity of acrostic writers to rely a good deal on some especial book: if "Digamma," in the *World*, had an especially teasing light in one of his "specials," experienced solvers used to consult Grove's "Dictionary of Music"; if "G. S." had an elusive verbal puzzle, they went for the "Twentieth Century Dictionary"—indeed, this useful book has been irreverently described, in letters addressed to the acrostic editor of the *World*, as "G. S.'s Bible"; if the *Daily Telegraph* has several untraceable quotations, there is a most useful book of miscellaneous humorous plays that has, on many occasions, helped considerably—perhaps it will not do so any more now. One of the recent acrostics written by "G. S." is No. 14, from the *World* of July 21st, 1914: solvers who have not seen it before will find that it takes some time to elucidate.

No. 14.

He a god and she a goddess,
"Ever bright and fair,"
Though they be not twins, at least they
Make a perfect pair.

1. Take it away, which promptly goes
   And, leaving her, leaves what? Who knows?
2. A Joseph, maybe, will avail;
   Remove the doctor, and curtail.
3. To two two letters now restore;
   You've more of Joseph than before.
4. Your bet you take; you lose your bet;
   This, number one, scores for you yet.

G. S.

And the third of the three is "Pax." He was an occasional contributor to the *Ladies' Field* ten or more years ago, and for the last three years has written fairly regularly for the *World*. Some of his acrostics have been very difficult, but the one which he has chosen as his best is not among his hardest. No. 15 appeared last year, in the Derby week; the uprights are clear, but one or two of the lights are not too easy.

No. 15.

He and his wife will see the race,
And back their fancies for a place.

1. A gale is raging. "Ding-dong, bell,"
   The sea-nymphs ring the fatal knell.
2. To arms! Quick, quick! Give me a kiss!
   (Engagement, surely, after this.)

3. Take foreign food, prefix a head,
And write result in French, instead.

4. A useful plant, when robes were few
And fashion's taste inclined to blue.

5. Take six, and seize—vous comprenez ?
Then halve : let not the French dismay.

6. The green pig leads, and, plain to see,
We find it the more readily.

7. The classic saying all must know :
The whole is part that has to go.

8. Some write their daily deeds inside ;
The anagram will cream provide.

PAX.

Two acrostics have already been quoted from the pages of the *Queen ;* another couple, by a different composer, are Nos. 16 and 17. The writer is " Xaintu," in whom bridge enthusiasts will recognize an old friend, Mr. Ernest Bergholt. He has contributed to the *Queen* for several years, and has made a selection of those which he considers to be his best acrostics. One of his most interesting productions, the acrostic on the death of Swinburne in the spring of 1909, is, unfortunately, too long to be reprinted here ; but No. 16, published on December 26th, 1914, though easy, is an attractive puzzle, and shows one of this author's styles.

No. 16.

Two heroes, whom, despite our best endeavour,
It seems almost impossible to sever ;
For if the bars we cut in twain,
And range them three and three,
Those firm allies we once again
Identically see !

1. Is this the very Polish Jew
Whom Chatrian and Erckmann drew ?

2. We may the worker re-arrange
And get a levy from the change.

3. The grief is poignant, strange to tell,
To bid our lov'd ones do it well.

4. Has hoops ; yet, since the storm I fear,
Be careful that it comes not near.

5. This creature (half devoid of taste)
Seized sailor Sindbad by the waist.

6. " The chariest maid is prodigal——
If she unmask her beauty to the moon."

XAINTU.

No. 17 appeared last May. The proem seems, at first, to be somewhat vague, but two easy lights, the second and the fifth, should sooner or later lead the solver to success. More than sixty readers sent in correct answers, and about twice as many were partly correct.

No. 17.

There are folk who praise the Censor,
And regard his pencil blue
With a gratitude intenser
Than is felt by me and you,
When, with gracious condescension,
He records our bold advance,
And we read of " the retention
Of (four asterisks) in France."

How our pulses beat, enraptured,
How our hearts within us glow,
When the (thing-em-bob) is captured
On the heights of (so-and-so) ;
How we marvel, when the daring
Of the (Blank Blank) Fusiliers
Leaves Von Hindenburg despairing
In a flood of scalding tears.

Shall we *ever* hear the story
Of that poison-laden air,
When we won undying glory
On the field of (Lord-knows-where) ?
How the Turks were stunned and shaken,
And their troops in thousands fled,
When Forts L, M, N were taken
By Rear-Admirals X—— and Z—— ?

Or will the old man, prattling
To the grandchild on his knee
Of the day when he was battling
For hill (twenty-four-nought-three),
Say : " 'Twas somewhere 'cross the ocean,
But exactly where, my pet,
I have not the slightest notion,
For they haven't told us *yet*."

1. A hundred yards in tenth part of a minute ?
Behead ; this issue of the *Queen* is in it.

2. Residing at the bottom of a well
(Where treacle-eating sisters used to dwell).

3. If once a scoundrel, then a scoundrel yet ;
The principal the investor will not get.

4. Extinction of such magnates all deplore ;
But if a fish, 'tis safely brought to shore.

5. " The lady's cheek
Trembled ; she nothing said, but, pale and meek,
Arose and knelt before him, wept a rain
Of sorrows at his words . . . ."

6. Displays a well-known article of dress ;
He seeks the cause with skill and steadfastness.

7. The source of this slight trifle seems to be
Reduplication of dexterity.

XAINTU.

Very few acrostics of the " connected poem " variety have been published in recent years, and none, except Lewis Carroll's, can be considered first class. No. 18, which he wrote in 1869, is one of the two printed in " Phantasmagoria " ; unfortunately, it seems that the answers have never been published, and the writer of this article is by no means

sure that he knows the complete solution: several clever acrosticians have evolved an answer, but one, if not more, of the lights may be incorrect. The second upright is "Commemoration," but the discovery of the first may not prove a very simple matter to solvers who have not seen the acrostic before.

No. 18.

There was an ancient City, stricken down
With a strange frenzy, and for many a day
They paced from morn to eve the crowded town,
And danced the night away.

I asked the cause: the aged man grew sad:
They pointed to a building grey and tall,
And hoarsely answered, "Step inside, my lad,
And then you'll see it all."

1. Yet what are all such gaieties to me
Whose thoughts are full of indices and surds?
$x^2 + 7x + 53 = 11$

2. But something whispered, "It will soon be done:
Bands cannot always play, nor ladies smile:
Endure with patience the distasteful fun
For just a little while!"

3. A change came o'er my Vision—it was night:
We clove a pathway through a frantic throng:
The steeds, wild-plunging, filled us with affright:
The chariots whirled along.

4. Within a marble hall a river ran—
A living tide, half muslin and half cloth:
And here one mourned a broken wreath or fan,
Yet swallowed down her wrath.

5. And here one offered to a thirsty fair
(His words half-drowned amid those thunders tuneful)
Some frozen viand (there were many there),
A tooth-ache in each spoonful.

6. There comes a happy pause, for human strength
Will not endure to dance without cessation;
And every one must reach the point at length
Of absolute prostration.

7. At such a moment ladies learn to give,
To partners who would urge them over-much,
A flat and yet decided negative—
Photographers love such.

8. There comes a welcome summons—hope revives,
And fading eyes grow bright, and pulses quicken;
Incessant pop the corks, and busy knives
Dispense the tongue and chicken.

9. Flushed with new life, the crowd flows back again:
And all is tangled talk and mazy motion—
Much like a waving field of golden grain,
Or a tempestuous ocean.

10. And thus they give the time, that Nature meant
For peaceful sleep and meditative snores,
To ceaseless din and mindless merriment
And waste of shoes and floors.

11. And One (we name him not) that flies the flowers,
That dreads the dances, and that shuns the salads,
They doom to pass in solitude the hours,
Writing acrostic-ballads.

12. How late it grows! The hour is surely past
That should have warned us with its double knock?
The twilight wanes, and morning comes at last—
"Oh, Uncle, what's o'clock?"

13. The Uncle gravely nods, and wisely winks.
It *may* mean much, but how is one to know?
He opes his mouth—yet out of it, methinks,
No words of wisdom flow.

The mine of first-class acrostics is not exhausted; in fact, only the very surface of the cream has been skimmed off. But lack of space prevents further quotation, and the enthusiast must look up back volumes of the various papers for himself; and it may be that the very best acrostic will be published in 1916.

The writer of this article wishes to express his sincere gratitude to Messrs. Macmillan and Co. for permission to reprint Lewis Carroll's acrostic, and to the many editors, acrostic editors, and authors who have given him leave to quote from their writings and have also helped him with much valuable advice and sympathy and have smoothed away many of his difficulties.

The answers to the acrostics given here will appear in the next number.

THE MIXER.

By
P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by J. A. Shepherd.

IT was one of those things which are really nobody's fault. It was not the chauffeur's fault, and it was not mine. I was having a friendly turn-up with a pal of mine on the side-walk: he ran across the road: I ran after him: and the car came round the corner and hit me. It must have been going pretty slow, or I should have been killed. As it was, I just had the breath knocked out of me. You know how you feel when the butcher catches you just as you are edging out of the shop with a bit of meat. It was like that.

I wasn't taking much interest in things for awhile, but when I did I found that I was the centre of a group of three—the chauffeur, a small boy, and the small boy's nurse.

The small boy was very well dressed, and looked delicate. He was crying.

"Poor doggie," he said. "Poor doggie."

"It wasn't my fault, Master Peter," said the chauffeur, respectfully. "He run out into the road before I saw him."

"That's right," I put in, for I didn't want to get the man into trouble.

"Oh, he's not dead," said the small boy. "He barked."

"He growled," said the nurse. "Come away, Master Peter. He might bite you."

Women are trying sometimes. It is almost as if they deliberately misunderstood.

"I won't come away. I'm going to take him home with me and send for the doctor to come and see him. He's going to be my dog."

This sounded all right. Goodness knows, I am no snob, and can rough it when required, but I do like comfort when it comes my way, and it seemed to me that this was where I got it. And I liked the boy. He was the right sort.

The nurse, a very unpleasant woman, had to make objections.

"Master Peter! You can't take him home, a great, rough, fierce, common dog! What would your mother say?"

"I'm going to take him home," repeated the child, with a determination which I heartily admired, "and he's going to be my dog. I shall call him Fido."

There's always a catch in these good things. Fido is a name I particularly detest. All dogs do. There was a dog called Fido that I knew once, and he used to get awfully sick when we shouted it out after him in the street. No doubt there have been respectable dogs called Fido, but to my mind it is a name like Aubrey or Clarence. You may be able to live it down, but you start handicapped. However, one must take the rough with the smooth, and I was prepared to yield the point.

"If you wait, Master Peter, your father will buy you a beautiful, lovely dog——"

"I don't want a beautiful, lovely dog. I want this dog."

The slur did not wound me. I have no

illusions about my looks. Mine is an honest, but not a beautiful face.

"It's no use talking," said the chauffeur, grinning. "He means to have him. Shove him in, and let's be getting back, or they'll be thinking His Nibs has been kidnapped."

So I was carried to the car. I could have walked, but I had an idea that I had better not. I had made my hit as a crippled dog, and a crippled dog I intended to remain till things got more settled down.

The chauffeur started the car off again. What with the shock I had had and the luxury of riding in a motor-car, I was a little distrait, and I could not say how far we went. But it must have been miles and miles, for it seemed a long time afterwards that we stopped at the biggest house I have ever seen. There were smooth lawns and flower-beds and men in overalls and fountains and trees and, away to the right, kennels with about a million dogs in them, all pushing their noses through the bars and shouting. They all wanted to know who I was and what prizes I had won, and then I realized that I was moving in high society.

I let the small boy pick me up and carry me into the house, though it was all he could do, poor kid, for I was some weight. He staggered up the steps and along a great hall, and then let me flop on the carpet of the most beautiful room you ever saw. The carpet was a yard thick.

There was a woman sitting in a chair, and as soon as she saw me she gave a shriek.

"I told Master Peter you would not be pleased, m'lady," said the nurse, who seemed to have taken a positive dislike to me, "but he would bring the nasty brute home."

"He's not a nasty brute, mother. He's my dog, and his name's Fido. John ran over him in the car, and I brought him home to live with us. I love him."

This seemed to make an impression. Peter's mother looked as if she were weakening.

"But, Peter, dear, I don't know what your father will say. He's so particular about dogs. All his dogs are prize-winners, pedigree dogs. This is such a mongrel."

"A nasty, rough, ugly, common dog, m'lady," said the nurse, sticking her oar in in an absolutely uncalled-for way.

Just then a man came into the room.

"What on earth?" he said, catching sight of me.

"It's a dog Peter has brought home. He says he wants to keep him."

"I'm *going* to keep him," corrected Peter, firmly.

I do like a child that knows his own mind. I was getting fonder of Peter every minute. I reached up and licked his hand.

"See! He know's he's my dog, don't you, Fido? He licked me."

"But, Peter, he looks so fierce." This, unfortunately, is true. I do look fierce. It is rather a misfortune for a perfectly peaceful dog. "I'm sure it's not safe your having him."

"He's my dog, and his name's Fido. I'm going to tell cook to give him a bone."

His mother looked at his father, who gave rather a nasty laugh.

"My dear Helen," he said, "ever since Peter was born, ten years ago, he has not asked for a single thing, to the best of my recollection, which he has not got. Let us be consistent. I don't approve of this caricature of a dog, but, if Peter wants him, I suppose he must have him."

"Very well. But, the first sign of viciousness he shows, he shall be shot. He makes me nervous."

So they left it at that, and I went off with Peter to get my bone.

After lunch he took me to the kennels to introduce me to the other dogs. I had to go, but I knew it would not be pleasant, and it wasn't. Any dog will tell you what these prize-ribbon dogs are like. Their heads are so swelled they have to go into their kennels backwards.

It was just as I had expected. There were mastiffs, terriers, poodles, spaniels, bulldogs, sheep-dogs, and every other kind of dog you can imagine, all prize-winners at a hundred shows, and every single dog in the place just shoved his head back and laughed himself sick. I never felt so small in my life, and I was glad when it was over and Peter took me off to the stables.

I was just feeling that I never wanted to see another dog in my life, when a terrier ran out, shouting. As soon as he saw me, he came up inquiringly, walking very stiff-legged, as terriers do when they see a stranger.

"Well," I said, "and what particular sort of a prize-winner are you? Tell me all about the ribbons they gave you at the Crystal Palace and let's get it over."

He laughed in a way that did me good.

"Guess again!" he said. "Did you take me for one of the nuts in the kennels? My name's Jack, and I belong to one of the grooms."

"What!" I cried. "You aren't Champion Bowlegs Royal or anything of that sort? I'm glad to meet you."

So we rubbed noses, as friendly as you please. It was a treat meeting one of one's own sort. I had had enough of those high-toned dogs who look at you as if you were something the garbage-man had forgotten to take away.

"So you've been talking to the swells, have you?" said Jack.

"He would take me," I said, pointing to Peter.

"Oh, you're his latest, are you? Then you're all right—while it lasts."

"How do you mean, while it lasts?"

"Well, I'll tell you what happened to me. Young Peter took a great fancy to me once. Couldn't do enough for me for awhile. Then he got tired of me, and out I went. You see, the trouble is that, while he's a perfectly good kid, he has always had everything he wanted since he was born, and he gets tired of things pretty easy. It was a toy railway that finished me. Directly he got that, I might not have been on the earth. It was lucky for me that Dick, my present old man, happened to want a dog to keep down the rats, or goodness knows what might not have happened to me. They aren't keen on dogs here, unless they've pulled down enough blue ribbons to sink a ship, and mongrels like you and me—no offence—don't last long. I expect you noticed that the grown-ups didn't exactly cheer when you arrived."

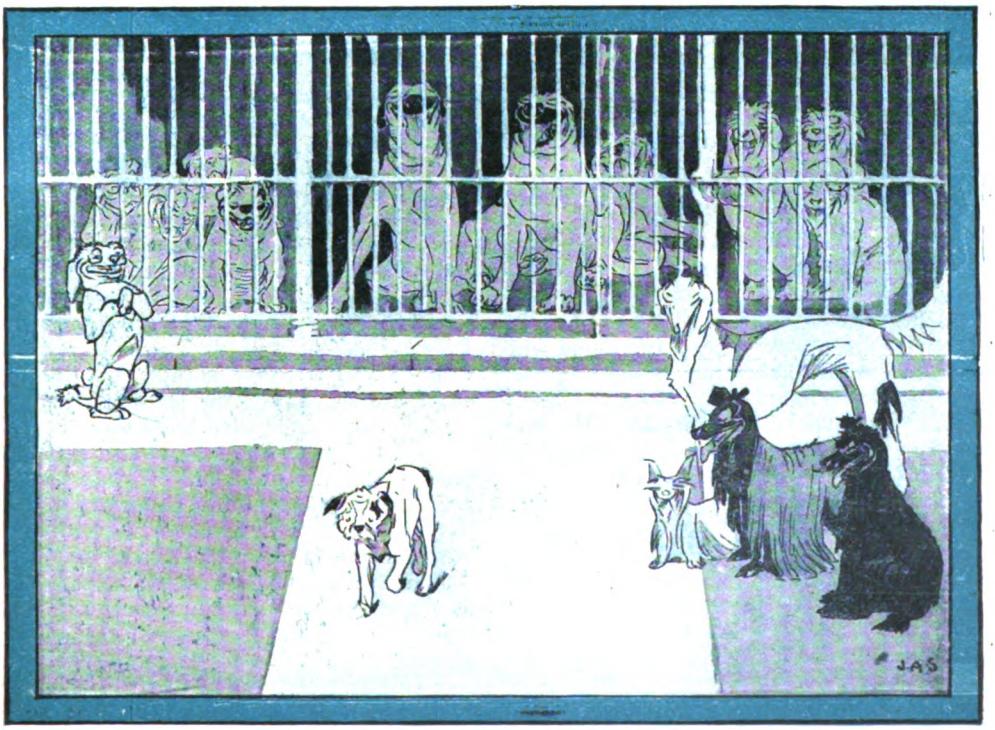
"They weren't chummy."

"Well, take it from me, your only chance is to make them chummy. If you do something to please them, they might let you stay on, even though Peter was tired of you."

"What sort of thing?"

"That's for you to think out. I couldn't find one. I might tell you to save Peter from drowning. You don't need a pedigree to do that. But you can't drag the kid to the lake and push him in. That's the trouble. A dog gets so few opportunities. But take it from me, if you don't do something within two weeks to make yourself solid with the adults, you can make your will. In two weeks Peter will have forgotten all about you. It's not his fault. It's the way he has been brought up. His father has all the money on earth, and Peter's the only child. You can't blame him. All I say is, look out for yourself. Well! I'm glad to have met you. Drop in again when you can. I can give you some good ratting, and I have a bone or two put away. So long."

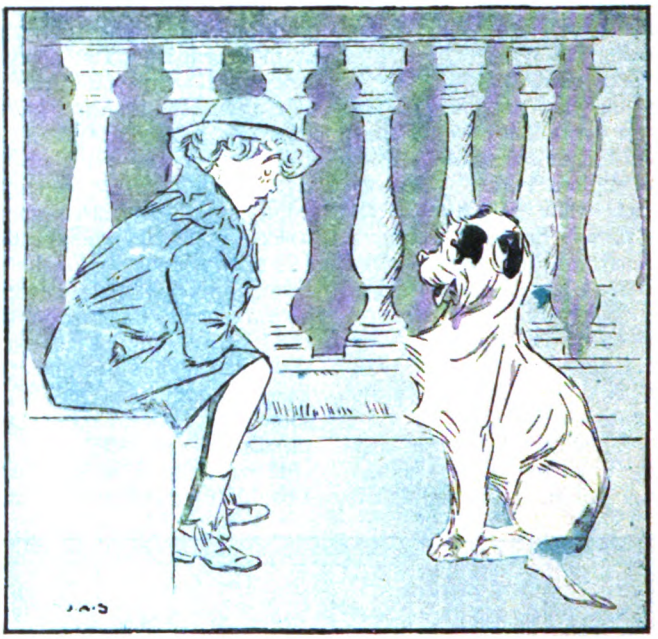
It worried me badly what Jack had said. I couldn't get it out of my mind. If it hadn't



"I NEVER FELT SO SMALL IN MY LIFE."

been for that, I should have had a great time, for Peter certainly made a lot of fuss of me. He treated me as if I were the only friend he had.

And in a way I was. When you are the only son of a man who has all the money in the world, it seems that you aren't allowed to be like an ordinary kid. They coop you up as if you were something precious that would be contaminated by contact with other children. In all the time that I was at the house, I never met another child. Peter had everything in the world, except someone of his own age to go round with, and that made him different from any of the kids I had known.



"HE LIKED TALKING TO ME. I WAS THE ONLY PERSON ROUND WHO REALLY UNDERSTOOD HIM."

He liked talking to me. I was the only person round who really understood him. He would talk by the hour, and I would listen with my tongue hanging out and nod now and then.

It was worth listening to, what he used to tell me. He told me the most surprising things. I didn't know, for instance, that there were any Red Indians in England, but he said there was a chief named Big Cloud who lived in the rhododendron bushes by the lake. I never found him, though I went carefully through them one day. He also said that there were pirates on the island on the lake. I never saw them either.

What he liked telling me about best was the city of gold and precious stones which you came to if you walked far enough through the woods at the back of the stables. He was always meaning to go off there some day, and, from the way he described it, I didn't blame him. It was certainly a pretty good city. It was just right for dogs, too, he said, having bones and liver and sweet cakes there and everything else a dog could want. It used to make my mouth water to listen to him.

We were never apart. I was with him all day, and I slept on the mat in his room at night. But all the time I couldn't get out of my mind what Jack had said. I nearly did once, for it seemed to me that I was so necessary to Peter that nothing could separate us; but, just as I was feeling safe, his father gave him a toy aeroplane which flew when you wound it up. The day he got it, I might not have been on the earth. I trailed along, but he hadn't a word to say to me.

Well, something went wrong with the aeroplane the second day, and it wouldn't fly, and then I was in solid again; but I had done some hard thinking and I knew just where I stood. I was the newest toy, that's what I was, and something newer might come along at any moment, and then it would be the finish for me. The only thing for me was to do something to impress the adults, just as Jack had said.

Goodness knows I tried. But everything I did turned out wrong. There seemed to be a fate about it. One morning, for example, I was trotting round the house early, and I met a fellow I could have sworn was a burglar. He wasn't one of the family, and he wasn't one of the servants, and he was hanging round the house in a most suspicious way. I chased him up a tree, and it wasn't till the family came down to breakfast two hours later that I found that he was a guest who had arrived overnight, and had come out early to enjoy the freshness of the morning and the sun shining on the lake, he being that sort of man. That didn't help me much.

Next, I got in wrong with the boss, Peter's father. I don't know why. I met him out

in the park with another man, both carrying bundles of sticks and looking very serious and earnest. Just as I reached him, the boss lifted one of the sticks and hit a small white ball with it. He had never seemed to want to play with me before, and I took it as a great compliment. I raced after the ball, which he had hit quite a long way, picked it up in my mouth, and brought it back to him. I laid it at his feet and smiled up at him.

"Hit it again," I said.

He wasn't pleased at all. He said all sorts of things and tried to kick me, and that night, when he thought I was not listening, I heard him tell his wife that I was a pest and would have to be got rid of. That made me think.

And then I put the lid on it. With the best intentions in the world I got myself into such a mess that I thought the end had come.

It happened one afternoon in the drawing-room. There were visitors that day—women; and women seem fatal to me. I was in the background, trying not to be seen, for, though I had been brought in by Peter, the family never liked my coming into the drawing-room. I was hoping for a piece of cake and not paying much attention to the conversation, which was all about somebody called Toto, whom I had not met. Peter's mother said Toto was a sweet little darling, he was; and one of the visitors said Toto had not been at all himself that day, and she was quite worried. And a good lot more about how all that Toto would ever take for dinner was a little white meat of chicken, chopped up fine. It was not very interesting, and I had allowed my attention to wander.

And just then, peeping round the corner of my chair to see if there were any signs of cake, what should I see but a great beastly brute of a rat. It was standing right beside the visitor drinking milk out of a saucer, if you please!

I may have my faults, but procrastination in the presence of rats is not one of them. I didn't hesitate for a second. Here was my chance. If there is one thing women hate, it is a rat. Mother always used to say, "If you want to succeed in life, please the women. They are the real bosses. The men don't count." By eliminating this rodent, I should earn the gratitude and esteem of Peter's mother, and, if I did that, it did not matter what Peter's father thought of me.

I sprang.

The rat hadn't a chance to get away. I was right on to him. I got hold of his neck, gave him a couple of shakes, and chucked him across the room. Then I ran across to finish him off.

Just as I reached him, he sat up and barked

"HE WASN'T PLEASED AT ALL. HE SAID ALL SORTS OF THINGS AND TRIED TO KICK ME."

"I PULLED UP SHORT AND STARED AT HIM."

at me. I was never so taken aback in my life. I pulled up short and stared at him.

"I'm sure I beg your pardon, sir," I said, apologetically. "I thought you were a rat."

And then everything broke loose. Somebody got me by the collar, somebody else hit me on the head with a parasol, and somebody else kicked me in the ribs. Everybody talked and shouted at the same time.

"Poor, darling Toto!" cried the visitor, snatching up the little animal. "Did the great savage brute try to murder you?"

"So absolutely unprovoked!"

"He just flew at the poor little thing!"

It was no good my trying to explain. Any dog in my place would have made the same mistake. The creature was a toy-dog of one of those extraordinary breeds—a prize-winner and champion, and so on, of course, and worth his weight in gold. I would have done better to bite the visitor than Toto. That much I gathered from the general run of the conversation, and then having discovered that the door was shut, I edged under the sofa. I was embarrassed.

"That settles it!" said Peter's mother. "The dog is not safe. He must be shot."

Peter gave a yell at this, but for once he didn't swing the vote an inch.

"Be quiet, Peter," said his mother. "It is not safe for you to have such a dog. He may be mad."

Women are very unreasonable.

Toto, of course, wouldn't say a word to explain how the mistake arose. He was sitting on the visitor's lap, shrieking about what he would have done if they hadn't separated us.

Somebody felt cautiously under the sofa. I recognized the shoes of Weeks, the butler. I suppose they had rung for him to come and take me, and I could see that he wasn't half

liking it. I was sorry for Weeks, who was a friend of mine, so I licked his hand, and that seemed to cheer him up a whole lot.

"I have him now, madam," I heard him say.

"Take him to the stables and tie him up, Weeks, and tell one of the men to bring his gun and shoot him. He is not safe."

A few minutes later I was in an empty stall, tied up to the manger.

It was all over. It had been pleasant while it lasted, but I had reached the end of my tether now. I don't think I was frightened, but a sense of pathos stole over me. I had meant so well. It seemed as if good intentions went for nothing in this world. I had tried so hard to please everybody, and this was the result—tied up in a dark stable, waiting for the end.

The shadows lengthened in the stable-yard, and still nobody came. I began to wonder if they had forgotten me, and presently, in spite of myself, a faint hope began to spring up inside me that this might mean that I was not to be shot after all. Perhaps Toto at the eleventh hour had explained everything.

And then footsteps sounded outside, and the hope died away. I shut my eyes.

Somebody put his arms round my neck and my nose touched a warm cheek. I opened my eyes. It was not the man with the gun, come to shoot me. It was Peter. He was breathing very hard, and he had been crying.

"Quiet!" he whispered.

He began to untie the rope.

"You must keep quite quiet, or they will hear us, and then we shall be stopped. I'm going to take you into the woods, and we'll walk and walk until we come to the city I told you about that's all gold and diamonds, and we'll live there for the rest of our lives, and no one will be able to hurt us. But you must keep very quiet."

He went to the stable gate and looked out. Then he gave a little whistle to me to come after him. And we started out to find the city.

The woods were a long way away, down a hill of long grass and across a stream; and we went very carefully, keeping in the shadows and running across the open spaces. And every now and then we would stop and look back, but there was nobody to be seen. The sun was setting, and everything was very cool and quiet.

Presently we came to the stream and crossed it by a little wooden bridge, and then we were in the woods, where nobody could see us.

I had never been in the woods before, and everything was very new and exciting to me. There were squirrels and rabbits and birds, more than I had ever seen in my life, and little things that buzzed and flew and tickled my ears. I wanted to rush about and look at everything, but Peter called to me, and I came to heel. He knew where we were going, and I didn't, so I let him lead.

We went very slowly. The wood got thicker and thicker, the farther we got into it. There were bushes that were difficult to push through, and long branches, covered with thorns, that reached out at you and tore at you when you tried to get away. And soon it was quite dark, so dark that I could see nothing, not even Peter, though he was so close. We went slower and slower, and the darkness was full of queer noises. From time to time Peter would stop, and I would run to him and put my nose in his hand. At first he patted me, but after awhile he did not pat me any more, but just gave me his hand to lick, as if it was too much for him to lift it. I think he was getting very tired. He was quite a small boy and not strong, and we had walked a long way.

It seemed to be getting darker and darker. I could hear the sound of Peter's footsteps, and they seemed to drag as he forced his way through the bushes. And then quite suddenly he sat down without any warning, and when I ran up I heard him crying.

I suppose there are lots of dogs who would have known exactly the right thing to do, but I could not think of anything except to put my nose against his cheek and whine. He put his arm round my neck, and for a long time we stayed like that, saying nothing. It seemed to comfort him, for after a time he stopped crying.

I did not bother him by asking about the wonderful city where we were going, for he was so tired. But I could not help wondering if we were near it. There was not a sign of any city, nothing but darkness and odd noises and the wind singing in the trees. Curious little animals, such as I had never smelt before, came creeping out of the bushes to look at us. I would have chased them, but Peter's arm was round my neck, and I could not leave him. But when something that smelt like a rabbit came so near that I could have reached out a paw and touched it, I turned my head and snapped; and then they all scurried back into the bushes and there were no more noises.

There was a long silence. Then Peter gave a great gulp.

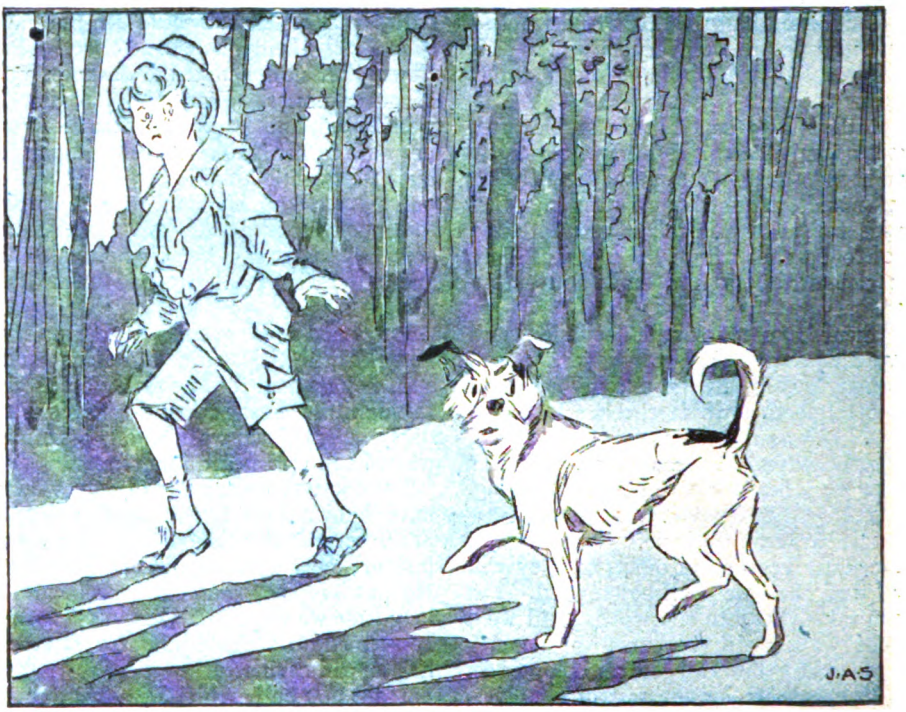
"I'm not frightened," he said. "I'm not!"

I shoved my head closer against his chest. There was another silence for a long time.

"I'm going to pretend we have been captured by brigands," said Peter at last. "Are you listening? There were three of them, great big men with beards, and they crept up behind me and snatched me up and took me out here to their lair. This is their lair. One was called Dick, the others' names were Ted and Alfred. They took hold of me and brought me all the way through the wood till we got here, and then they went off, by his breathing that he was asleep. His head was resting on my back, but I didn't move. I wriggled a little closer to make him as comfortable as I could, and then I went to sleep myself.

I didn't sleep very well. I had funny dreams all the time thinking those little animals were creeping up close enough out of the bushes for me to get a snap at them without disturbing Peter.

If I woke once, I woke a dozen times, but there was never anything there. The wind sang in the trees and the bushes rustled, and far away in the distance the frogs were calling.



"HE KNEW WHERE WE WERE GOING, AND I DIDN'T, SO I LET HIM LEAD."

meaning to come back soon. And while they were away, you missed me and tracked me through the woods till you found me here. And then the brigands came back, and they didn't know you were here, and you kept quite quiet till Dick was quite near, and then you jumped out and bit him and he ran away. And then you bit Ted and you bit Alfred, and they ran away, too. And so we were left all alone, and I was quite safe, because you were here to look after me. And then—— And then——"

His voice died away, and the arm that was round my neck went limp, and I could hear

And then I woke once more with the feeling that this time something really was coming through the bushes. I lifted my head as far as I could, and listened. For a little while nothing happened, and then, straight in front of me, I saw lights. And there was a sound in the undergrowth.

It was no time to think about not waking Peter. This was something definite, something that had to be attended to quick. I was up with a jump, yelling. Peter rolled off my back and woke up, and he sat there listening, while I stood with my front paws on him and shouted at the men. I was bristling all over.

I didn't know who they were or what they wanted, but the way I looked at it was that anything could happen in those woods at that time of night, and, if anybody was coming along to start something, he had got to reckon with me.

Somebody called " Peter ! Are you there, Peter ? "

There was a crashing in the bushes, the lights came nearer and nearer, and then somebody said, " Here he is ! " and there was a lot of shouting. I stood where I was, ready to spring if necessary, for I was taking no chances.

" Who are you ? " I shouted. " What do you want ? "

A light flashed in my eyes.

" Why, it's that dog ! "

Somebody came into the light, and I saw it was the boss. He was looking very anxious and scared, and he scooped Peter up off the ground and hugged him tight.

Peter was only half-awake. He looked up at the boss drowsily, and began to talk about brigands and Dick and Ted and Alfred, the same as he had said to me. There wasn't a sound till he had finished. Then the boss spoke.

" Kidnappers ! I thought as much. And the dog drove them away ! "

For the first time in our acquaintance he actually patted me.

" Good old man ! " he said.

" He's my dog," said Peter, sleepily, " and he isn't to be shot."

" He certainly isn't, my boy," said the boss. " From now on he's the honoured guest. He shall wear a gold collar and order what he wants for dinner. And now let's be getting home. It's time you were in bed."

Mother used to say, " If you're a good dog, you will be happy. If you're not, you won't." But it seems to me that in this world it is all a matter of luck. When I did everything I could to please people, they wanted to shoot me, and when I did nothing except run away, they brought me back and treated me better than the most valuable prize-winner in the kennels. It was puzzling at first, but one day I heard the boss talking to a friend who had come down from the city.

The friend looked at me, and said, " What an ugly mongrel ! Why on earth do you have him about ? I thought you were so particular about your dogs."

And the boss replied, " He may be a mongrel, but he can have anything he wants in this house. Didn't you hear how he saved Peter from being kidnapped ? "

And out it all came about the brigands.

" The kid called them brigands," said the boss. " I suppose that's how it would strike a child of that age. But he kept mentioning the name Dick, and that put the police on the scent. It seems there's a kidnapper well known to the police all over the country as Dick the Snatcher. It was almost certainly that scoundrel and his gang. How they spirited the child away, goodness knows, but they managed it, and the dog tracked them and scared them off. We found him and Peter together in the woods. It was a narrow escape, and we have to thank this animal here for it."

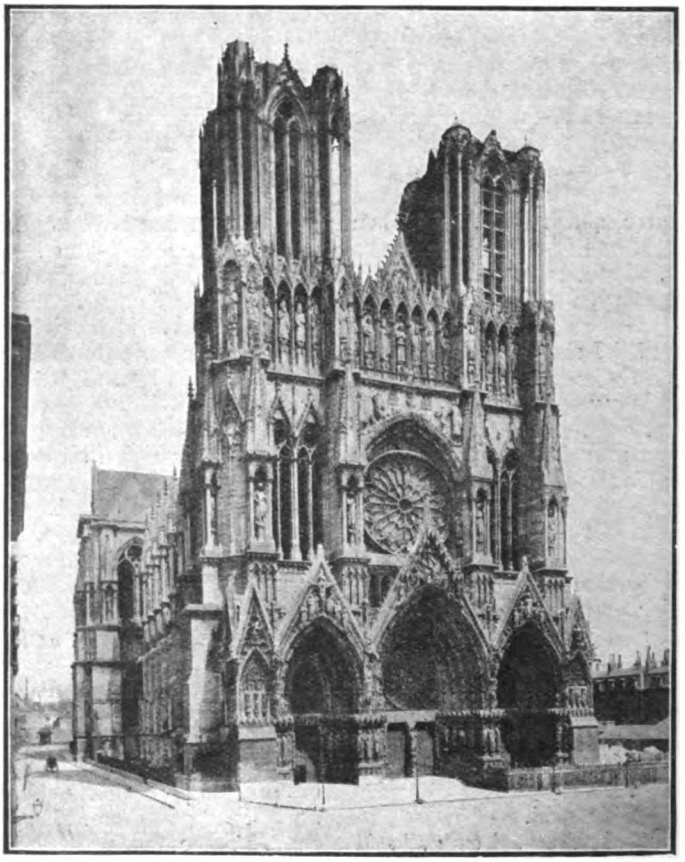
What could I say ? It was no more use trying to put them right than it had been when I mistook Toto for a rat. Peter had gone to sleep that night pretending about the brigands to pass the time, and he had woken up believing in them. He was that sort of child. There was nothing that I could do about it.

Round the corner, as the boss was speaking, I saw the kennel-man coming with a plate in his hand. It smelt fine, and he was headed straight for me.

He put the plate down before me. It was liver, which I love.

" Yes," went on the boss, " if it hadn't been for him, Peter would have been kidnapped and scared half to death, and I should be poorer, I suppose, by whatever the scoundrels had chosen to hold me up for."

I am an honest dog, and hate to obtain credit under false pretences, but—liver is liver. I let it go at that.



RHEIMS CATHEDRAL BEFORE THE WAR.

Ruins or Restorations?

A SYMPOSIUM OF EMINENT MEN OF FRANCE AND BELGIUM.

Are the great and sacred buildings of France and Belgium which have been damaged or destroyed to be restored after the war, or should their ruins be left as everlasting memorials of the infamy of the Barbarians? On this subject, which is of interest to the whole civilized world, some of the greatest experts in those countries have been good enough to favour us with their opinions.

M. PELADON,

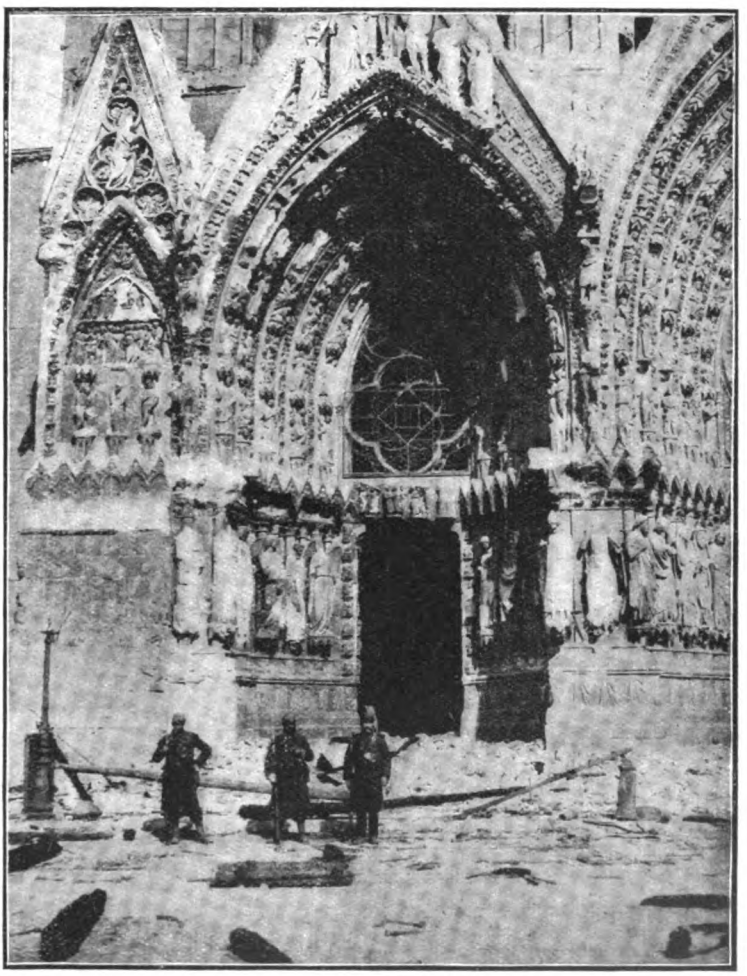
One of the most learned writers and theosophists of our time.

STRANGE opinions have been given as to our duty with regard to the ruins of Rheims Cathedral. Some would like to see our monuments remain in the condition in which the Germans left them, building a copy of the original at the side of the ruins. My opinion is that everything should be restored which has been destroyed, so as to be exactly as it was before.

The framework, the bell-tower with its caryatides, even the font can be rebuilt without risk of error. As to the statues, that of the angel to the right of St. Nicoise should have the head restored in accordance with the moulding. In support of this opinion, I will cite the

celebrated statue of Strasburg, which has been replaced by a copy in stone, the original statue, which time had worn away, having been sent to the storehouse opposite.

There is another reason besides the artistic one for restoring Notre Dame de Rheims and St. Rémy. They are living monuments, and not survivals of art like the Parthenon or the Maison Carrée. The original idea of these buildings has not ceased to unite the souls of men. To me, the angels are exactly what they were to Jean d'Orbais, and it is the same with the majority of Frenchmen. At a time when the skill of surgeons can repair injuries to our wounded heroes, are we to leave our works of art without heads and arms?



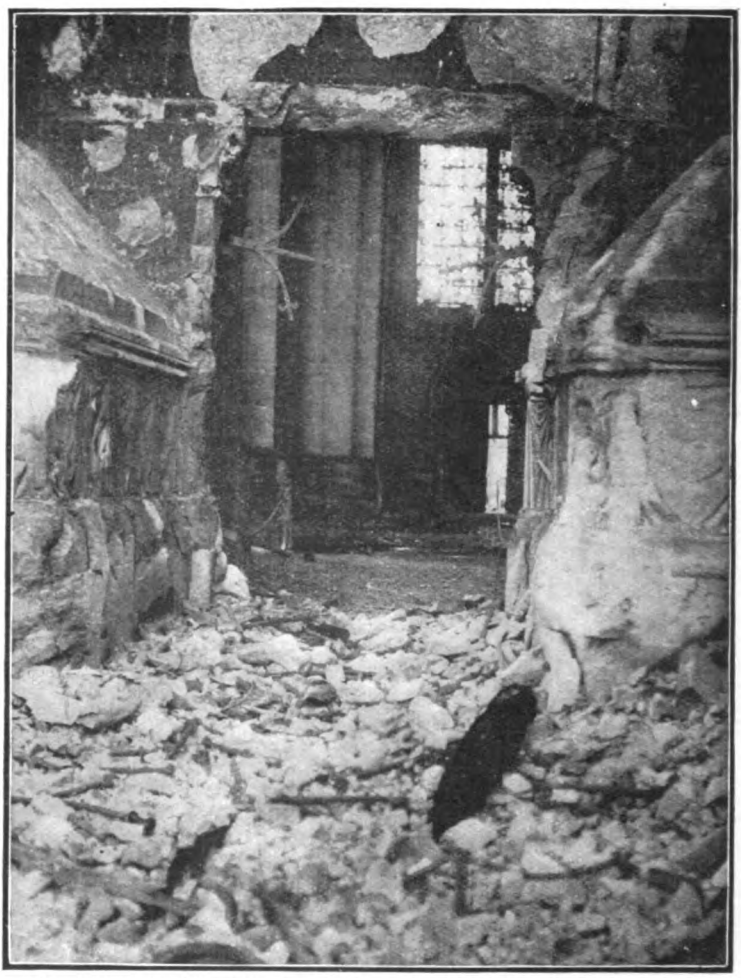
ONE OF THE DAMAGED DOORWAYS OF RHEIMS CATHEDRAL AFTER THE BOMBARDMENT.
Photo. by [*Central News.*

I know that the restoration of the great doorway will present difficulties, and I do not know if the moulding of all the small figures which have been burned has been preserved. But the indisputable duty of the nation seems to me to be to restore all that can be scrupulously copied.

M. EMILE BOUTRONS,

One of the greatest philosophers of our time, a Member of the French Academy, and an unrivalled master of pure French thought.

With regard to the Cathedral of Rheims, I understand how overwhelming would be the everlasting sight of what the barbarians have done. But it represents the continuity of our



THIS PHOTOGRAPH GIVES SOME IDEA OF THE DAMAGE DONE TO THE INTERIOR OF RHEIMS CATHEDRAL.

Photo. by Central News.

history, the unity of our country through the ages; it must preserve its character and show us the France of Joan of Arc still living. My opinion is that it should be piously restored.

M. RÉMY DE GOURMONT,

The well-known modern romance writer, author of "Une Nuit au Luxembourg," "Un Cœur Virginal," etc.

There is no doubt whatever that reconstruction or restoration will be necessary. Neither Rheims nor Arras can be left with a town hall in ruins. This does not mean that architects and masons are to destroy the traces of the German outrages to the ancient stones, any more than surgeons in healing a wound destroy the recollection of the injuries. We must treat wounded monuments as we treat wounded persons. In many cases the wound will be difficult to heal, and the monument will retain its scars. So much the better. May these scars last as long as the recollection of our wrongs, which will be transmitted to the hearts of generation after generation.

M. PAUL BOURGET,

An author whose fame is world-wide.

It is not easy to obtain the opinion of M. Paul Bourget. He told us that he could not

answer us exactly. "I do not know exactly in what state the Cathedral of Rheims is at present," he said, "therefore I cannot tell you if it is right or not to touch it. I have not seen it, and I do not want to speak of what I do not know."

But, on the question of principle, he agreed to tell us that he was of opinion that "everything possible to restore should be restored, and that the smallest possible amount of ruins should be left on the invader's track."

This opinion will have full weight in the present discussion.

M. EMILE VERHAEREN,

The national poet of martyred Belgium, gives this advice :—

Since it is a question of the preservation of monuments which date from the thirteenth or fourteenth century, let us follow the example of what was done in those times, and let us make a distinction :—

Ruined monuments should, I think, be left to their existence of glorious dust. They should not be reconstructed.

Injured monuments, which have been broken, defaced, or thrown down, could be restored without much difficulty, if care and judgment are used in the work of restoration.

M. CAMILLE ENLART,

The distinguished Curator of the Trocadero Museum in Paris.

In reply to the question which you have asked me, I will say first of all that, considering the variety of the cases, any absolute principle would lead to error.

It is indispensable that the proofs of German barbarism should remain everywhere, to the everlasting shame of our enemies.

But our enemies have wished to deprive us of our monuments ; it is essential, therefore, that we should not be deprived of them.

When a building has only been slightly injured, we can repair it, still leaving traces of the injuries it has received. Any restoration which would be practically a reconstruction should not be undertaken ; we should rebuild beside the ruins, which would be classed and preserved *as* ruins.

There are cases, however, in which it will be necessary to depart from these general principles. The Town Hall of Arras, with the two squares, formed a very original and very interesting whole. It is possible to restore its exact appearance, so this should be done, for the work, well executed, will have the value of a good copy.

The Cathedral of Rheims has suffered in its structure and in its statuary. All the architectural part can, perhaps, be exactly restored ; the statuary, on the contrary, shows a perfection too subtle to be restored. We might as well try to complete the friezes of the Parthenon. Under these conditions, it will be necessary to repair the building so that it may be rendered fit to use, leaving all its ornamentation in the mutilated state in which it is now. I should even advise filling up the spaces in the stained glass with a coloured glass, which, without causing ugly blots painful to the eye, would show for all time the ravages committed.

In the Cathedral of Soissons nothing has been destroyed which cannot be exactly restored ; the architecture is precise and the ornamentation very clear and simple.

Each case deserves a special examination, and the solutions, like the considerations, will be different. Unfortunately the cases are too numerous to be gone into here.

M. CAMILLE MAUCLAIR,

An art critic and writer of great distinction ; author of "La Ville Lumière," "Auguste Rodin," etc.

I believe that there should be different kinds of treatment according to the monuments injured. To give you a full opinion, I should have to inspect each of them. But I think that restorers and reconstructors are to be classed immediately after the German barbarians in the category of vandals.

It is possible that we can and must reconstruct the Town Hall of Arras, but for the basilica of Rheims I can only see a splendid but pathetic fate : to remain a ruin, the Ruin of the West, as the Parthenon is the Ruin of the East, surrounded with railings and marble slabs relating the dates and details of the crime, for the eternal edification of indignant and disgusted pilgrims from all the regions of the world.

SOME OF THE DAMAGE DONE TO SOISSONS CAT

Photo. by Topical Press.

But, I repeat, the steps to be taken will depend on the extent of the damage done in each place. If it is only a matter of *concealed* supports, that may always be done. But who could be mad enough to speak of "rebuilding" the Cathedral of Rheims, or even of restoring a single one of the statues or ornaments destroyed by fire?

M. LÉON BERARD,

The former Minister of Fine Arts, who has been kind enough to send us his opinion from the Front.

If the Germans had destroyed the "Pilgrims of Emmaus," the "Prisoners" of Michael Angelo, or the "Marseillaise" of Rude, there could certainly be no question of repairing those masterpieces. It is an artistic impossibility, of the same kind as that which, in my opinion, opposes the reconstruction of such monuments as the Cathedral of Rheims.

If we have only ruins left to us we must preserve them religiously. The soul of the cathedral will survive with seven centuries of the history of France. And some day, after our victory, we will invite the presence at that pilgrimage of the antiquaries of Jena and the philosophers of Königsberg, with the curators of Berlin and Dresden, to

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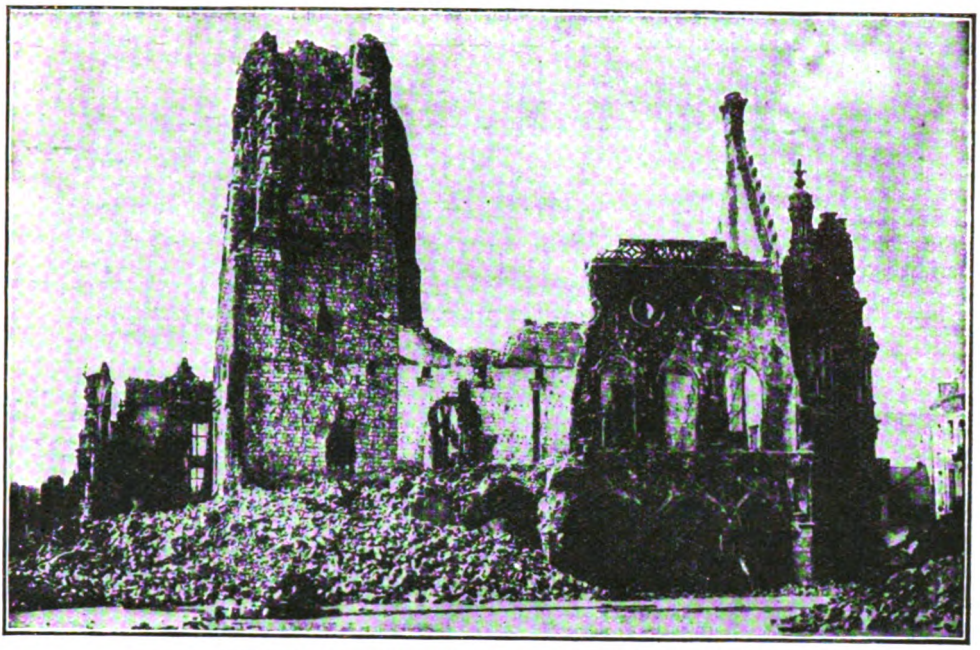
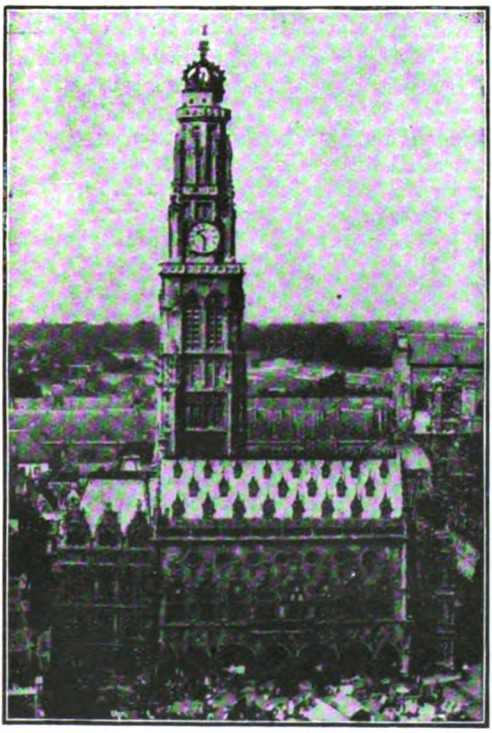


ALL THAT REMAINS OF THE TOWN HALL OF ARRAS TO-DAY.

Photo. by Topical Press.



ARRAS TOWN HALL, ONE OF THE ARCHITECTURAL GLORIES OF FRANCE.

Photo. by Underwood & Underwood.

see if they are capable of repentance, and if in their country there is any difference between a man of taste and a Prussian trooper.

M. JEAN DE BONNEFON,

Who has written a great deal in England, where he is not less well known than in France as an art critic.

No one believes that a uniform law can be applied to the various stone victims of the year of barbarism. The Cathedral of Rheims, by its ancient origin, by its historic beauty, dominates all other structures. It has been a living picture of the history of France up to 1830. Now that it is dead (or wounded) it expresses the history of France up to 1915. It has become the sacred symbol of French education as contrasted with the false German culture. To restore it, to efface the traces of the shells, would be to commit a crime against France.

But if we cannot restore it, it is necessary to preserve it: if the church is intact (in the interior) in one of its chapels, and if the roof of this same chapel is broken, we must not permit the rain to finish what the Germans began. On the contrary, if one of those magnificent statues on the western portal is mutilated, we must beg the architects not to replace the glorious victim by a

pretty little new statue copied in some fashion from the original. What is true of Rheims can also be fairly said about Soissons, Senlis, and Laon.

M. JOSEPH REINACH,

The author of the pleasant articles published daily in the *Figaro*.

The façade of the Cathedral of Arras, mutilated in its most exquisite sculptures and in its magnificent decoration, and the shapeless heap of ruins which is all that is left of the Town Hall and belfry of Arras, should be left as they are for the instruction of future generations, for the glorification of the afflicted cities. The ruins must remain as an eternal witness of the crime, and a punishment for the authors of that crime. Formerly we had no Parthenon, no Pæstum, no Forum of Trajan. Now we have them. Let us keep them. They are so many treasures of our sorrows and of our sufferings. Do not let them be touched.

M. PAUL GINISTY,

Journalist and statesman, and former manager of the Odéon, whose son fell on the battle-field in the first months of the war, writes as follows:—

I am afraid of the too clever architects who are ambitious to repair the Cathedral of Rheims, and of the sculptors who propose to replace the statues which have disappeared. Mutilated, the cathedral has a beauty so great that it seems audacious to touch it. But the high priest of Rheims itself said to me a few days ago, not sharing these scruples: "The church was built for worship." I replied: "Who will reproduce the faith of those who built it?"

Only the pious hands of their workmen were able to raise these monuments, and it would be a sort of sacrilege to replace them by others less sublime and inspired.

Let us raise monuments in keeping with the spirit of our own time, but let us keep as objects of pilgrimage those which have been the victims of the crime.

ANTONIN MERCIÉ,

The great sculptor, Member of the Institute and President of the Society of French Artists.

Do not touch anything. You have not the right. You must not restore anything. Keep all in the condition of immortality in which it has been placed by the guns of the barbarians. Do not let us commit sacrilege also.

If we were able to do it, perhaps we might consider the subject! But none of us is able to do it. No one to-day can rebuild the Cathedral of Rheims. Put on the roof and open the place again for public worship. But stop there. Who could replace the stained windows? Who could restore the burned statues? Who could build in its special style the Town Hall of Arras? Enclose all the ruined monuments with flower-plots. Protect them like rare jewels. But do not touch them. As you are not capable of doing it well, do not add, by your barbarism, to the horror of the work of the Germans. Follow the example of the ancients. You know the splendid ruins of the Parthenon. Have you ever thought of restoring the Parthenon? To touch it would be to chase away the gods who still dwell there, and who will never leave it.

M. ROMAIN ROLLAND and M. RODIN.

M. Romain Rolland, a much-esteemed French writer, who has excited a great deal of interest recently in France by his articles in the *Journal de Genève*, quotes in his answer a statement by Rodin, the great sculptor of the French nation, who contributes a very important argument to the debate.

From a purely artistic point of view (the only one which is suitable in judging art) I will tell you that I have never liked *restorations*, and that I am opposed to all *reconstruction* of ancient monuments. For no thought of modern days is able to revive fully the feeling of the creator in past times. A being which is lost cannot be replaced, and to think that this can be done shows that one has never really appreciated what has been lost.

Rodin wrote to me on October 1st last, the day after the destruction of Rheims:—

"*Ignorance is so great everywhere that people believe that a cathedral can be repaired and restored. If that were true, the harm done would not be great; we could rebuild cathedrals for money as we can rebuild a battleship. But the sad thing is that no one now knows how to build them.*"

Let us be content to restrain as far as possible the work of destruction ; let us try to retard the progress of decay, and let a new life flourish over the ruins of the past !

M. HANS RYNER,

Whom his young colleagues elected a few years ago, in a transport of enthusiasm, as "Prince of French Authors."

Reconstruct the Cathedral of Rheims and the Town Hall of Arras ! Why not restore the arms of the Venus of Milo ? Do not let us add the barbarism of the antiquary to the barbarism of the soldier.

A ruin keeps its life, its feeling, its poetry. A ruin is a noble thing which restoration only spoils.

M. A. ROLL,

The great French painter, President of the National Society of Fine Arts and Member of the Institute.

I have seen the Cathedral of Rheims several times since its bombardments, and I had previously known it well. When I saw it after the accounts given by the newspapers of the atrocity, I felt great emotion.

Formerly, in their imposing majesty, the two towers formed part of the whole splendour of the edifice. Now, riddled by shells, like two skeleton arms, they recall the arms of a tortured martyr. They are raised to heaven imploring redress.

The shells ran along the walls, and the lacework in stone was broken away. The statues have fallen from their bases. Nothing is left of them. Some parts, terribly mutilated, are discoloured and spoiled, as if by coagulated blood. But the whole is marvellously beautiful.

It is not possible to dream of restoring the Cathedral of Rheims. But if some day anyone thought of doing so, we should all protest against it. I do not believe that an artist, a thinker, could have any other opinion. For it has never been so beautiful, this Cathedral of Rheims. It has less ornament, less intricate details. From the point of view of grace it has perhaps lost a great deal. But it has gained a great deal from the point of view of pure beauty. The ignorant Germans, who thought they were massacring it, did not suspect the miracle they were working. But when the crumbling stones have been strengthened, when the remains have been supported, it will be our best vengeance to show it to the invader finer and more beautiful than when he saw it first.

M. GEORGES LECOMTE,

The eminent writer, who is President of the Society of Authors of France.

No, I do not think we ought to restore or reconstruct. There are glorious wounds, scars which ennoble. Let us rather protect these tortured stones and respect their sufferings, their mutilated greatness. At the hour of victory, nothing will speak more plainly than such monuments—Rheims and Arras—standing purified by the brand of fire. They will cry aloud against the impious hands which attacked their immortal splendour.

It is history, tragic and glorious, which speaks to us from these broken stones, the magnificent history of France, shining in all its beauty from the Cathedral of Rheims. What right have we to efface this page of our national life ? Let us be careful not to forget too soon. Future generations must know what has been done, and must remember it for ever.

As we have just seen, opinions differ. Some think that the ruins ought to be restored, because it would be neither charitable nor noble to keep these monuments of misfortunes. But others, the more numerous, consider that these witnesses of Teuton barbarism ought to be respected as silent teachers to coming generations. For these ruined churches, these burnt palaces, these broken spires, these pillaged shrines, these ravaged villages will be the best object-lesson to our children's children of what would have become of the lofty principles of national liberty and of humanity if the enemy had been able to establish his empire over the nations.

The CRYSTAL TRENCH

By

A. E. W. MASON.

Illustrated by G. Henry Evison.

I.

IT was late in the season, and for the best part of a week the weather had been disheartening. Even to-day, though there had been no rain since last night, the mists swirled in masses over a sunless valley green as spring, and the hill-sides ran with water. It pleased Dennis Challoner, however, to believe that better times were coming. He stood at a window of the Riffelalp Hotel, and imagined breaches in the dark canopy of cloud.

"Yes," he said, hopefully, "the weather is taking up."

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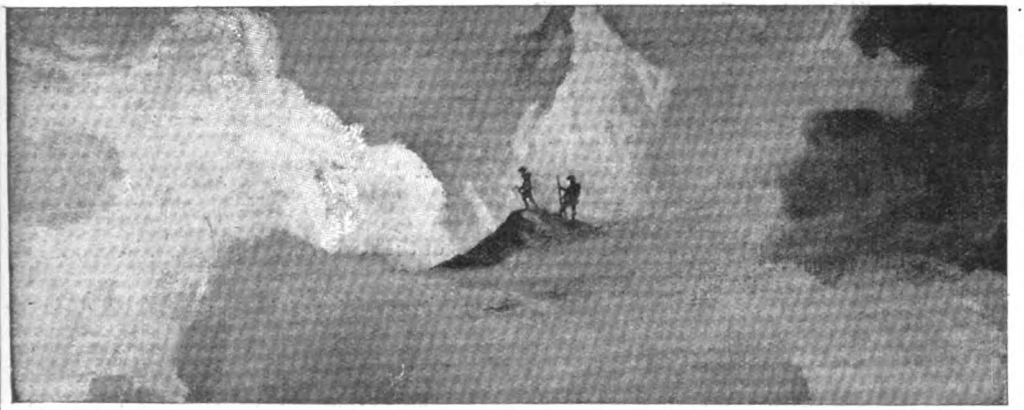


He was speaking to a young girl whose name he did not know, a desultory acquaintance made during the twelve hours which he had passed at the hotel.

"I believe it is," she answered. She looked out of the window at two men who were sitting disconsolately on a bench. "Those are your men, aren't they? So you climb with guides!"

There was a note of deprecation in her voice quite unmistakable. She was trying not to show scorn, but the scorn was a little too strong for her. Challoner laughed.

"I do. With guides I can go where I like, when I like. I don't have to hunt for companions or make arrangements beforehand. I have climbed with the Blauers for five years now, and we know each other's ways."

He broke off, conscious that in her eyes he was making rather feeble excuses to cover his timidity and incompetence.

"I have no doubt you are quite right," she replied. There was a gentle indulgence in her voice, and a smile upon her lips which cried as plainly as words, "I could tell you something if I chose." But she was content to keep her triumphant secret to herself. She laid her hand upon the ledge of the window, and beat a little tattoo with her finger-tips, so that Challoner could not but look at them. When he looked he understood why she thus called his attention. She wore a wedding-ring.

Challoner was surprised. For she was just a tall slip of a girl. He put her age at nineteen or less. She was clear-eyed and pretty, with the tremendous confidence of one who looks out at life from the secure shelter of a schoolroom. Then, with too conscious an unconsciousness, she turned away, and Challoner saw no more of her that day.

But the hotel was still full, though most of the climbers had gone, and in the garden looking over the valley of Zermatt, at six o'clock that evening, a commotion broke out about the big telescope. Challoner was discussing plans for the morrow with his guides by the parapet at the time, and the three men turned as one towards the centre of the clamour. A German tourist was gesticulating excitedly amidst a group of his compatriots. He broke through the group and came towards Challoner, beaming like a man with good news.

"You should see—through the telescope—since you climb. It is very interesting. But you must be quick, or the clouds will close in again."

"What do you mean?" Challoner asked.

"There, on the top of the Weisshorn, I saw two men."

"Now? At six o'clock in the evening—on a day of storm?" Challoner cried. "It's impossible."

"But I have seen them, I tell you."

Challoner turned and looked down and across the valley. The great curtain of cloud hung down in front of the hills like wool. The lower slopes of dark green met it, and on them the black pines marched up into the mist. Of rock and glacier and soaring snow not an inch was visible. But the tourist clung to his story.

"It is my first visit to the mountains. I was never free before, and I must go down to-morrow morning. I thought that even now I should never see them—all the time I have been here the weather has been terrible. But at the last moment I have had the good fortune. Oh, I am very pleased."

The enthusiasm of this middle-aged German business man, an enthusiasm childlike as it was sincere, did not surprise Challoner. He looked upon that as natural. But he doubted

the truth of the man's vision. He wanted so much to see that he saw.

"Tell me exactly what you saw," Challoner asked, and this was the story which the tourist told.

He was looking through the telescope when suddenly the clouds thinned, and through a film of vapour he saw, very far away and dimly, a soaring line of black like a jagged reef, and a great white slope more solid than the clouds, and holding light. He kept his eye to the lens, hoping with all his soul that the wonderful vision might be vouchsafed to him, and as he looked, the screen of vapour vanished, and he saw quite clearly the exquisite silver pyramid of the Weisshorn soaring up alone in the depths of a great cavern of grey cloud. For a little while he continued to watch, hoping for a ray of sunlight to complete a picture which he was never to forget, and then, to his amazement and delight, two men climbed suddenly into his vision on to the top of the peak. They came from the south or the south-west.

"By the Schalligrat!" exclaimed Challoner. "It's not possible!"

"Yes," the tourist protested. He was sure. There was no illusion at all. The two men did not halt for a second on the top. They crossed it, and began to descend the long ridge towards the Zermatt valley.

"I am sure," he continued. "One of the climbers, the one in front, was moving very slowly and uncertainly like a man in an extremity of weakness. The last was strong. I saw him lift the rope between them, which was slack, and shake the snow off it——"

"You saw that?" exclaimed Challoner. "What then?"

"Nothing. The clouds closed again over the peak, and I saw no more."

Challoner had listened to the story with a growing anxiety. He took the chair behind the telescope, and sat with his eye to the lens for a long while. But he saw only writhing mists in a failing light. He rose and moved away. There was no mountaineer that day in the hotel except himself. Not one of the group about the telescope quite understood the gravity of the story which had been told them—if it were true. But it could not be true, Challoner assured himself.

It was just possible, of course, that on a fine day some party which had adventured upon a new ascent might find itself on the top of the Weisshorn at six o'clock in the evening. But on a day like this no man in his senses would be on any ridge or face of that mountain at all, even in the morning. Yet the tourist's story was circumstantial. That was the fact which troubled Challoner. The traverse of the Weisshorn from the Schallijoch, for instance, was one of the known difficult climbs of the Pennine Alps. There was that little detail, too, of the last man shaking the snow from the slack of the rope. But no doubt the tourist had read the year-books of the Austrian Alpine Club. Certainly he must have been mistaken. He wanted to see; therefore he saw. It was inconceivable that the story should be true.

Thus Challoner thought all through that evening and the next day. But as he left the dining-room the manageress met him with a grave face, and asked him into her office. She closed the door when he had entered the room, and said:—

"There has been an accident."

Challoner's thoughts flew back to the story of the tourist.

"On the Weisshorn?"

"Yes. It is terrible!" And the woman sat down, while the tears came into her eyes and ran down her cheeks.

Two young Englishmen, it appeared, Mark Frobisher and George Liston, had come up from the valley a week ago. They would not hear of guides. They had climbed from Wasdale Head and in the Snowdon range. The Alpine Club was a body of old fogies. They did not think much of the Alps.

"They were so young—boys! Mr. Frobisher brought a wife with him."

"A wife?" exclaimed Challoner.

"Yes. She was still younger than he was, and she spoke as he did—knowing nothing, but full of pride in her husband, and quite confident in his judgment. They were children—that is the truth—and very likely we might have persuaded them that they were wrong—if only Herr Ranks had not come, too, from Vienna about the same time."

Challoner began dimly to understand the tragedy which had happened. Ranks was well known amongst mountaineers. Forty years old, the right age for endurance, he was known for a passion for long expeditions undertaken with very small equipment; and for a rather dangerous indifference as to the companions he climbed with. He had at once proposed the Schalligrat ascent to the two Englishmen. They had gone down to Randa, slept the night there, and in bad weather had walked up to the Weisshorn hut, with provisions for three days. Nothing more had been heard of the party until this very afternoon, when Ranks and George

Liston, both exhausted and the latter terribly frost-bitten, staggered into the Randa Hotel.

"That's terrible," said Challoner. But still more terrible was the story which the Austrian had to tell. He had written it out at once very briefly, and sent it up to the Riffelalp. The manageress handed the letter now to Challoner.

"We stayed in the hut two days," it ran, "hoping that the weather would lift. The next morning there were promising signs, and taking our blankets we crossed the Schalliberg glacier, and camped on the usual spur of the Schallihorn. We had very little food left, and I know now that we ought to have returned to Randa. But I did not think of the youth of my companions. It was very cold during the night, but no snow fell, and in the morning there was a gleam of sunshine. Accordingly we started, and reached the Schallijoch in four hours and a half. Under the top of the col we breakfasted, and then attacked the ridge. The going was very difficult; there was often a glaze of black ice upon the rocks, and as not one of us knew the ridge at all, we wasted much time in trying to traverse some of the bigger gendarmes on the western side, whereas they were only possible on the east. Moreover, the sunlight did not keep its promise: it went out altogether at half-past ten; the ridge became bitterly and dangerously cold, and soon after midday the wind rose. We dared not stop anywhere, and our food was now altogether exhausted. At two o'clock we found a shelter under a huge tower of red rock, and there we rested. Frobisher complained of exhaustion, and was clearly very weak. Liston was stronger, but not in a condition for a climb which I think must always be difficult and was now hazardous in the extreme. The cold had made him very sleepy. We called a council of war. But it was quite evident to me that we could not get down in the state in which we were, and that a night upon the ridge without food or drink was not to be thought of. I was certain that we were not very far from the top, and I persuaded my friends to go forward. I climbed up and over the red tower by a small winding crack in its face, and with great difficulty managed, by the help of the rope, to draw my friends up after me. But this one tower took more than an hour to cross, and on a little snow-col like a knife-edge on the farther side of it, Frobisher collapsed altogether. What with the cold and his exhaustion his heart gave out. I swear that we stayed with him until he died—yes, I swear it—although the wind was very dangerous to the rest of us, and he was evidently dying. We stayed with him—yes. When all was over, I tied him by the waist with a piece of spare rope we carried to a splinter of rock which cropped out of the col, and went on with Liston. I did not think that we should either of us now escape, but the rock-towers upon the arête came to an end at last, and at six o'clock we stood on the mountain-top. Then we changed the order, Liston going now first down the easy eastern ridge. The snow was granulated and did not bind, and we made very slow progress. We stopped for the night at a height, I should think, of thirteen thousand feet, with very little protection from the wind. The cold was terrible, and I did not think that Liston would live through the night. But he did, and to-day there was sunlight, and warmth in the sunlight, so that moving very carefully we got down to the hut by midday. There, by a happy chance, we found some crusts and odds and ends of food which we had left behind; and after a rest were able to come on to Randa, getting some milk at the half-way chalet on the way down. Liston is frost-bitten in the feet and hands, but I think will be able to be moved down to the clinic at Lucerne in a couple of days. It is all my fault. Yes. I say that frankly. I alone am to blame. I take it all upon my shoulders. You can say so freely at the Riffelalp. 'Ranks takes all the blame.' I shall indeed write to-morrow to the Zurich papers to say that the fault is mine."

Challoner read the message through again. The assumption of magnanimity in the last few lines was singularly displeasing, and the eager assertion that the party had not left Frobisher until he was actually dead seemed to protest overmuch.

"That's a bad letter," said Challoner, but the manageress had no thoughts to spare for it.

"Who will tell her?" she asked, rocking her body to and fro, and fixing her troubled eyes on Challoner. "It is you. You are her countryman."

Challoner was startled.

"What do you mean?"

"He brought a wife with him."

"Frobisher?"

"Yes. They had only been married a couple of months. She is a year or two younger than he is—a child. Oh, and she was so proud of him. For my part I did not like him very much. I would not have

trusted him with the happiness of anyone I cared for. But she had given him all her heart. And now she must be told!"

"She is in the hotel now?" Challoner asked.

"Yes. You were talking to her yesterday."

Challoner did not need the answer.

"Very well. I will tell her." And he turned away, his heart sick at the task which lay before him. But before he had reached the door the woman called him back.

"Could we not give her just one more night of confidence and contentment? Nothing can be done until to-morrow. No one in the hotel knows but you and I. She will have sorrow enough. She need not begin to suffer before she must. Just one more night of quiet sleep."

So she pleaded, and Challoner clutched at the plea. He was twenty-six, and up to the moment life had hidden from him her stern ordeals. How should he break the news? He needed time carefully to prepare the way. He shrank from the vision of the pain which he must inflict.

"Yes, it can all wait until to-morrow," he said, and he went out of the office into the hall. There was a sound of music in the big drawing-room—a waltz, and the visitors were dancing to it. The noise jarred upon his ears, and he crossed towards the garden door in order to escape from it. But to reach the garden he had to pass the ballroom, and as he passed it he looked in, and the irony of the world shocked him so that he stood staring upon the company with a white face and open-mouthed. Frobisher's widow was dancing. She was dancing with all the supple grace of her nineteen years, her face flushed and smiling, whilst up there, fourteen thousand feet high on the storm-swept ridge of the Weisshorn, throughout that bitter night her dead husband bestrode the snow, and nodded and swayed to the gale. As she whirled past the door she saw him. She nodded and smiled with the pleasant friendliness of a girl who is perfectly happy, and with just a hint of condescension for the weaker vessel who climbed with guides. Challoner hurried out into the garden.

He went up to her room the next morning and broke the news to her as gently as he could. He was prepared for tears, for an overwhelming grief. But she showed him neither. She caught at an arm of a chair, and leaning upon it, seated herself when he began to speak. But after that she listened, frowning at him in a perplexity like a child over some difficult problem of her books. And when he had finished she drew a long breath.

"I don't know why you should try to frighten me," she said. "Of course, it is not true."

She would not believe—no, not even with Ranks's letter in her hand, at which she stared and stared as though it needed decoding.

"Perhaps I could read it if I were alone," she said at last, and Challoner left her to herself.

In an hour she sent for him again. Now indeed she knew, but she had no tears wherewith to ease her knowledge. Challoner saw upon her face such an expression of misery and torture as he hoped never to see again. She spoke with a submission which was very strange. It was only the fact of her youth, not her consciousness of it, which seemed to protest against her anguish as against an injustice.

"I was abrupt to you," she said. "I am sorry. You were kind to me. I did not understand. But I understand now, and there is something which I should like to ask you. You see, I do not know."

"Yes?"

"Would it be possible that he should be brought back to me?"

She had turned to the window, and she spoke low, and with a world of yearning in her voice.

"We will try."

"I should be so very grateful."

She had so desolate a look that Challoner made a promise of it, even though he knew well the rashness of the promise.

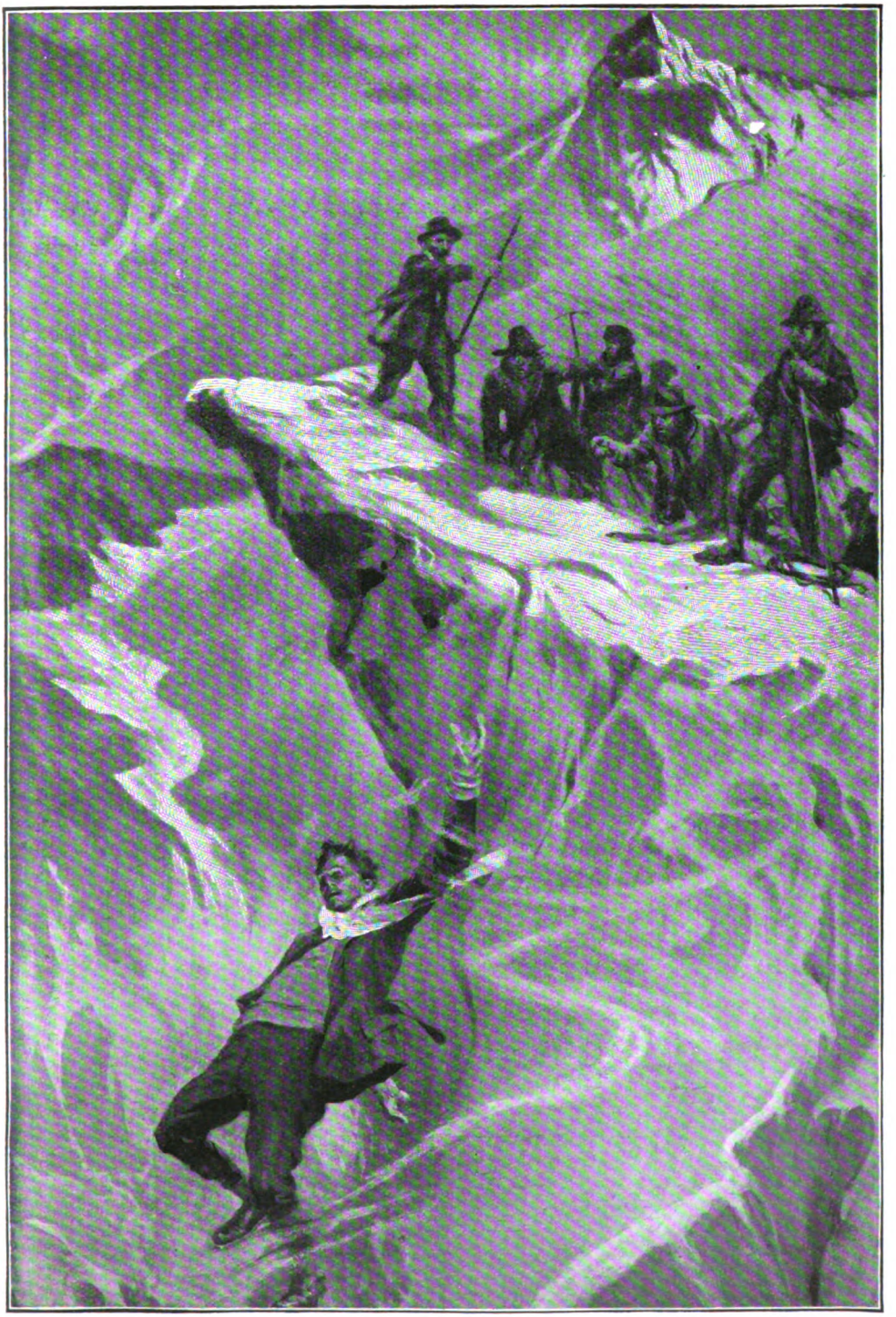
"You will go yourself?" she asked, turning her face to him.

"Of course."

"Thank you. I have no friends here, you see, but you."

Eight guides were collected that afternoon in the valley. Challoner brought down his two, and the whole party, under the guide-chief, moved up to the Weisshorn hut. Starting the next morning with a clear sky of starlight above their heads, they crossed the mountain by the eastern arête, and descending the Schalligrat, found young Frobisher tied by the waist and shoulders to a splinter of rock as Ranks had described. He was astride a narrow edge of snow, a leg dangling down each precipice. His eyes stared at them, his mouth hung open, and when any stray gust of wind struck the ridge, he nodded at them with a dreadful pleasantry. He had the air, to Challoner's eyes, of a live paralytic rather than of a man frozen and dead. His face was the colour of cheese.

With infinite trouble they lifted him back



"A CRY OF HORROR BROKE FROM THE RESCUE PARTY."

on to the mountain summit, and roped him round in a piece of stout sacking. Then they dragged him down the snow of the upper part of the ridge, carried him over the lower section of rock, and, turning off the ridge to the right, brought him down to the glacier.

It was then three o'clock in the afternoon, and half an hour later the grimmest episode of all that terrible day occurred. The lashing of the rope got loose as they dragged the body down the glacier, and suddenly it worked out of the sacking and slid swiftly past them down a steep slope of ice. A cry of horror broke from the rescue party. For a moment or two they watched it helplessly as it gathered speed and leapt into the air from one little hummock to another, the arms tossing and whirling like the arms of a man taken off his guard. Then it disappeared with a crash into a crevasse, and the glacier was empty.

The party stood for a little while aghast, and the illusion which had seized upon Challoner when he had first come in sight of the red rock-tower on the other ridge attacked him again. He could not get it out of his thoughts that this was a living man who had disappeared from their gaze, so natural had all his movements been.

The party descended to the lip of the crevasse, and a guide was lowered into it. But he could not reach the bottom, and they drew him up again.

"That is his grave," said Joseph Blauer, solemnly; and they turned away again and descended to Randa.

"How shall I meet that girl?" Challoner asked himself, in a passion of remorse. It seemed to him that he had betrayed a trust, and the sum of treachery deepened in him when he did tell it that night at the Riffelalp. For tears had their way with her at last. She buried her face in her arms upon the table, and sobbed as though her heart would burst.

"I had so hoped that you would bring him back to me," she said. "I cannot bear to think of him lying for ever in that loneliness of ice."

"I am very sorry," Challoner stammered, and she was silent. "You have friends coming out to you?" he asked.

"Yes."

He went down into the hall, and a man whose face he remembered came eagerly towards him. Challoner was able to identify him the next moment. For the man cried out:—

"It is done. Yes, it is in all the Zurich papers. I have said that I alone am to blame. I have taken the whole responsibility upon my shoulders." Herr Ranks brimmed with magnanimity.

II.

TOWARDS Christmas of that year Challoner, at his chambers in the Temple, received a letter in an unfamiliar hand. It came from Mrs. Frobisher. It was a letter of apology. She had run away into hiding with her sorrow, and only during the last weeks had she grown conscious of the trouble which Challoner had taken for her. She had quite forgotten to thank him, but she did so now, though the thanks were over-late. Challoner was very glad to receive the letter. From the day when he had seen her off from the new station in the valley, he had lost sight of her altogether, but the recollection of her pale and wistful face at the carriage window had haunted him. With just that look, he had thought, might some exile leave behind every treasured thing and depart upon a long journey into perpetual banishment. This letter, however, had a hint, a perfume of springtime. Stella Frobisher—by that name she signed—was beginning to recreate her life.

Challoner took a note of her address, and travelled into Dorsetshire on the Saturday. Stella Frobisher lived in a long and ancient house, half farm, half mansion, set apart in a rich country close to Arishmell Cove. Through a doorway one looked into a garden behind the house which even at that season was bright with flowers. She lived with the roar of the waves upon the shingle in her ears and the gorse-strewn downs before her eyes. Challoner had found a warm and cheerful welcome at that house, and came back again to it. Stella Frobisher neither played the hermit nor made a luxury out of her calamitous loss. She rebuilt her little world as well as she could, bearing herself with pride and courage. Challoner could not but admire her; he began to be troubled by what seemed to him the sterility of a valuable life. He could not but see that she looked forward to his visits. Other emotions were roused in him, and on one morning of summer, with the sea blue at her feet and the gorse a golden flame about her, he asked her to marry him.

Stella Frobisher's face grew very grave.

"I am afraid that's impossible," she said slowly, a little to his surprise and a great deal to his chagrin. Perhaps she noticed the chagrin, for she continued quickly, "I shall tell you why. Do you know Professor Kersley?"

Challoner looked at her with astonishment.

"I have met him in the Alps."

Stella Frobisher nodded. "He is supposed to know more than anyone else about the movements of glaciers."

Dimly Challoner began to understand, and he was startled.

"Yes," he answered.

"I went to call on him at Cambridge. He was very civil. I told him about the accident on the Weisshorn. He promised to make a calculation. He took a great deal of trouble. He sent for me again and told me the month and the year. He even named a week, and a day in the week." So far she had spoken quite slowly and calmly. Now, however, her voice broke, and she looked away. "On July 21st, twenty-four years from now, Mark will come out of the ice at the snout of the Hohlicht glacier."

Challoner did not dispute the prophecy. Computations of the kind had been made before with extraordinary truth.

"But you won't wait till then?" he cried, in protest.

For a little while she found it difficult to speak. Her thoughts were very far away from that shining sea and homely turf.

"Yes," she said at last, in a whisper; "I am dedicated to that as a nun to her service." And against that dead man wrapped in ice, his unconquerable rival, Challoner strove in vain.

"So you must look elsewhere," Stella said. "You must not waste your life. I am not wasting mine. I live for an hour which will come."

"I am in too deep, I am afraid, to look elsewhere," said Challoner, gloomily. Stella Frobisher looked at him with a smile of humour playing about her mouth.

"I should like to feel sorry about that," she said. "But I am not noble, and I can't."

They went together down to the house, and she said: "However, you are young. Many things will happen to you. You will change."

But as a matter of fact he did not. He wanted this particular woman, and not another. He cursed himself considerably for his folly in not making sure, when the rescue party got down from the rocks on to the glacier, that the rope about the sacking was not working loose. But such reproaches did not help forward his suit. And the years slipped away, each one a trifle more swiftly than that which had gone before. But in the press of a rising practice he hardly noticed their passage. From time to time Stella Frobisher came to town, sat in the Law Courts while he argued, was taken to shop in Bond Street, and entertained at theatres. Upon one such visit they motored—for motors had come now—on an evening in June down the Portsmouth road, and dined at the inn at Ockham. On their way she said, simply:—

"It is the year."

"I know," replied Challoner. "Shall I come with you?"

She caught his hand tightly for a moment.

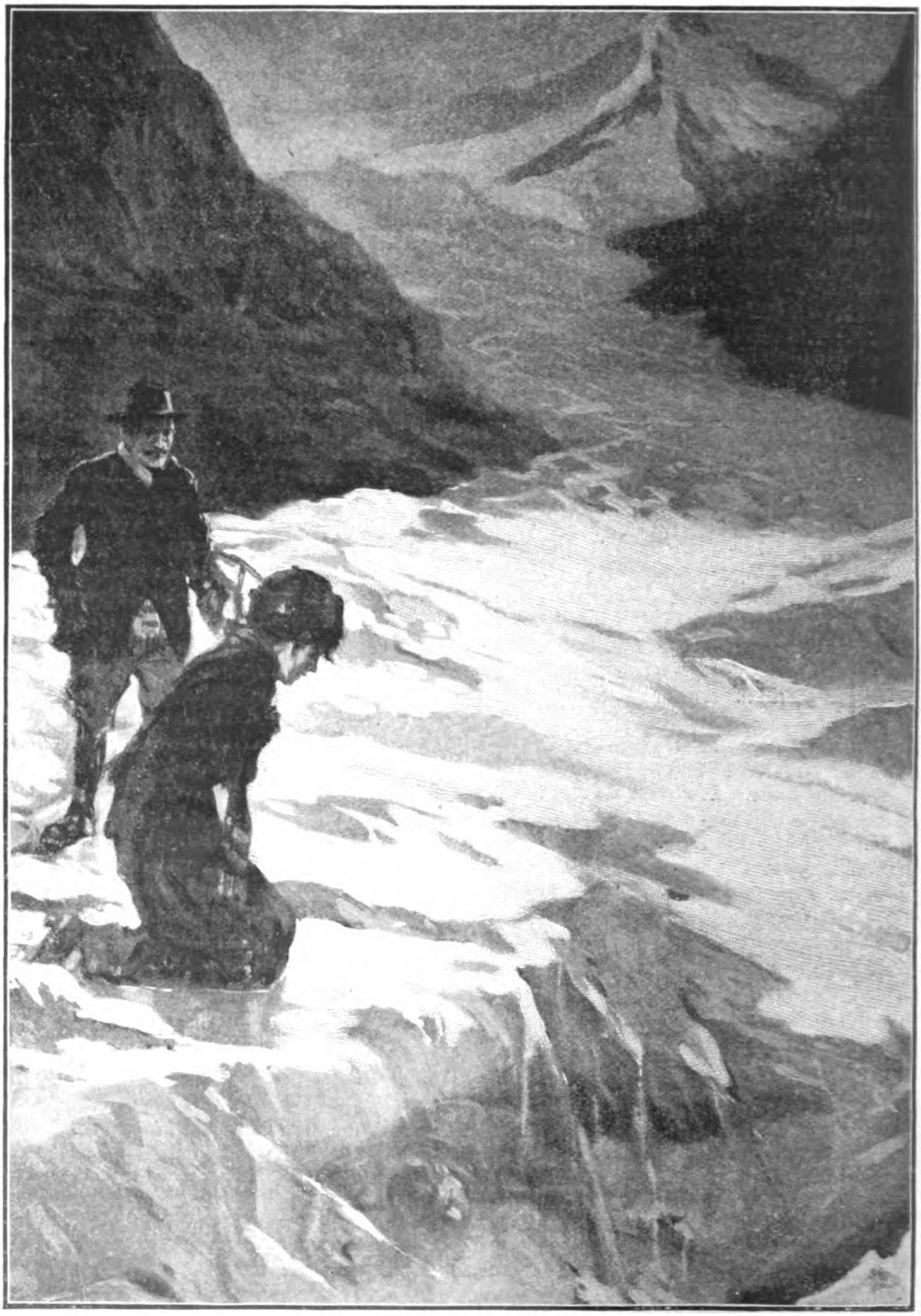
"Oh, if you could! I am a little afraid—now."

He took her out to Randa. There were many changes in the valley. New hotels had sprung up; a railway climbed nowadays to the Riffelalp; the tourists came in hundreds instead of tens; the mountains were overrun. But Challoner's eyes were closed to the changes. He went up through the cleft of the hills to where the glaciers come down from the Weisshorn and the Schallijoch and the Moming Pass; and as July drew on, he pitched a camp there, and stood on guard like a sentinel.

There came a morning when, coming out of his tent on to a knoll of grass, he saw below him on the white surface of the glacier, and not very far away, something small and black.

"It's a pebble, no doubt," he thought, but he took his axe and climbed down on to the ice. As he approached the object the surer he became. It was a round pebble, polished black and smooth by the friction of the ice. He almost turned back. But it was near, and he went on. Then a ray of sunlight shot down the valley, and the thing flickered. Challoner stooped over it curiously and picked it up. It was a gold watch, lying with its dial against the ice, and its case blackened save for a spot or two where it shone. The glass was missing and the hands broken, and it had stopped. Challoner opened it at the back; the tiny wheels, the coil of the mainspring, were as bright as on the day when the watch was sold. It might have been dropped there out of a pocket a day or two ago. But ice has its whims and vagaries. Here it will grind to powder, there it will encase and preserve. The watch might have come out of the ice during this past night. Was the glacier indeed giving up its secrets?

Challoner held the watch in his hand, gazing out with blind eyes over the empty, silent world of rock and ice. The feel of it was magical. It was as though he gazed into the sorcerer's pot of ink, so vivid and near were those vanished days at the Riffelalp and the dreadful quest in the silver peak now soaring high above his head. He continued his search



"UNDER THE ICE MARK FROBISHER LAY QUIETLY, LIKE A YOUTH ASLEEP."

that morning. Late in the afternoon he burst into the hotel at Randa. Stella Frobisher drew him away into the garden, where they were alone. He gave the watch into her hands, and she clasped it swiftly against her heart with an unearthly look of exaltation upon her face.

"It is his?" asked Challoner.

"Yes. I will go up."

Challoner looked at her doubtfully. He had been prepared to refuse her plea, but he had seen, and having seen, he consented.

"To-morrow—early. Trust me. That will be time enough."

He collected porters that evening, and at daybreak they walked out from the chalets and up the bank of the glacier, left the porters by his tent, and he led her alone across the glacier and stopped.

"Here," he said. In front of her the glacier spread out like a vast fan within the cup of the hills, but it was empty.

"Where?" she asked, in a whisper, and Challoner looked at her out of troubled eyes, and did not answer. Then she looked down, and at her feet just below the surface of the glacier, as under a thick sheet of crystal, she saw after all these years Mark Frobisher. She dropped on her knees with a loud cry, and to Challoner the truth about all these years came home with a dreadful shock.

Under the ice Mark Frobisher lay quietly, like a youth asleep. The twenty-four years had cut not a line about his mouth, not a wrinkle about his eyes. The glacier had used him even more tenderly than it had used his watch. The years had taken no toll of him. He was as young, his features were as clear and handsome, as on the day when he had set out upon his tragic expedition. And over him bent his wife, a woman worn, lined, old. For the first time Challoner realized that all her youth had long since gone, and he understood for the first time that, as it was with her, so, too, it was with him. Often enough he had said, "Oh, yes, I am getting on. The years are passing." But he had used the words with a laugh, deferring to convention by the utterance of the proper meaningless thing. Now he understood the meaningless thing meant the best part of everything. Stella Frobisher and he were just a couple of old people, and their good years had all been wasted.

He gently raised Stella Frobisher to her feet.

"Will you stand aside for a little?" he said. "I will call you."

She moved obediently a few yards away, and Challoner summoned the porters. Very carefully they cut the ice away. Then he called aloud:—

"Stella!" And she returned.

There was no sheet of ice between them now; the young man and the worn woman who had spent their youth together met thus at last. But the meeting was as brief as a spark.

The airs of heaven beat upon Mark Frobisher, and suddenly his face seemed to quiver and his features to be obscured. Stella uttered a scream of terror, and covered her face with her hands. For from head to foot the youth crumbled into dust and was not. And some small trifle tinkled on the ice with a metallic sound.

Challoner saw it shining at the bottom of the shallow trench of ice. It was a gold locket on a thin chain. It was still quite bright, for it had been worn round the neck and under the clothes. Challoner stooped and picked it up and opened it. A face stared boldly out at him, the face of a girl, pretty and quite vulgar, and quite strange to him. A forgotten saying took shape slowly in his memory. What was it that the woman who had managed the hotel at the Riffelalp had said to him of Frobisher?

"I did not like him. I should not trust him."

He looked up to see Stella Frobisher watching him with a white face and brooding eyes.

"What is that?" she asked.

Challoner shut the locket.

"A portrait of you," he said, hastily.

"He had no locket with a portrait of me," said Stella Frobisher.

Over the shoulder of a hill the sun leapt into the sky and flooded the world with gold.

FIG. 1.

FIG. 2.

FIG. 3.

These three pairs of eyes are identically the same, but while in Fig. 2 they are gazing direct at the spectator from all points of view, in Fig. 3 they are looking to the right—showing that in deciding whether a person is looking at us or not, we are influenced, apart from the position of the eyes, by the aspect of the entire face.

The Eyes of Portraits as Optical Illusions.

With Drawings by Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A.

These curious facts, which are taken from a volume of the "Philosophical Transactions" for the year 1826, have never before been made accessible to the public.

WHEN we look direct at anything we turn both our face and eyes towards that object, and, in that case, the iris will be in the middle of the white of the eyeball; in other words, there will be the same amount of white on each side of the iris. On the contrary, if our eyes are turned to one side or the other, while the head remains stationary the portion of white visible decreases on that side towards which the eyes look. Anyone observing us can, therefore, at once say whether we are looking straight ahead, or to the right, or to the left.

On the other hand, the direction of our eyes as regards the person who is observing us is not quite the same thing. Dr. Wollaston, who was the first to study the subject early last century, came to the conclusion that, in deciding whether a person is looking at us or not, we are influenced, apart from the position of the iris, by the aspect of the entire face. To prove this, he invoked the aid of the first portrait painter of his day, Sir Thomas Lawrence.

If a pair of eyes be skilfully drawn, looking at the spectator, their direction will appear vague and indeterminate, unless something is added to suggest the turn of face. But what is very extraordinary is that the same pair of eyes may be made to change their apparent direction by the addition to them of other features turned in various ways.

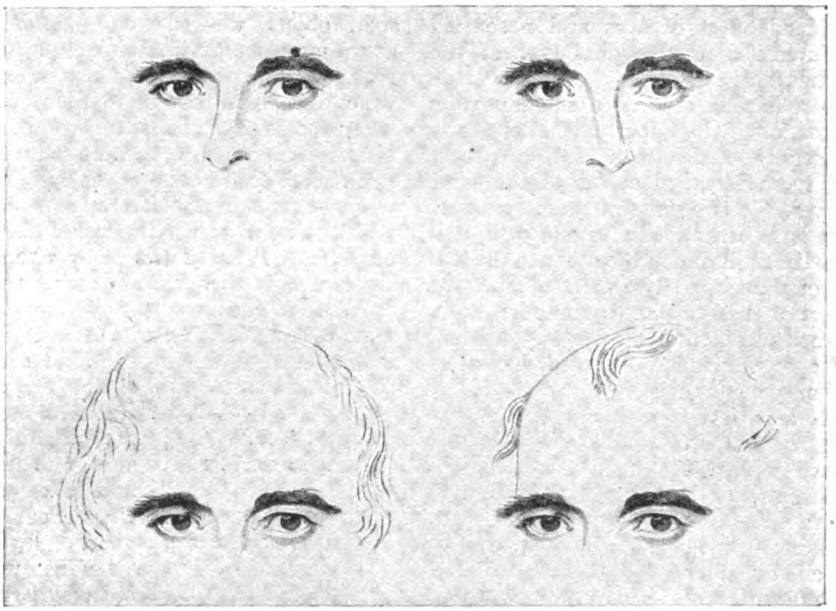


FIG. 4.

These examples show how the addition of a small portion of a face alters the apparent direction of identically the same eyes.

Such a pair of eyes were drawn by Sir Thomas Lawrence and are represented in the male heads first reproduced. Examine the pair of these eyes shown in Fig. 1. They appear to look straight at you, no matter from what angle you may view them. When the bottom part of a face turned slightly towards the left has been added (Fig. 2), the spectator's impression that the eyes are looking at him is intensified. Now proceed to substitute for this portion of a face another set of features turned towards the spectator's right. Immediately, as if by magic, the eyes appear to change their direction and to look also to the right (Fig. 3). The effect is so startling that it is very difficult to persuade ourselves it is not due to some trickery.

Of course, it is nothing of the kind. The direction of the new face, especially of the nose, which would be that of a face looking to our right, is alone responsible for our changed impression.

The eyes themselves, though looking at the spectator, are, it will be noticed, very slightly turned to the right. When the first face (Fig. 2), turned to the left, is added to them the effect is to give the eyes a pull as it were in that direction, which makes them look practically straight ahead. When the second face, with the right turn, is added (Fig. 3),

FIG. 5.—"INQUISITIVE ARCHNESS"

BECOMES— FIG. 6.—"DEVOUT ABSTRACTION."

Showing that a change of features alters not only the apparent direction but the expression of the same eyes.

the combined effect of eyes and nose still further intensifies the original turn of the eyes to the right.

The introduction of even a small portion of the nose, or of the upper part of the face, has precisely the same effect. In Fig. 4 there are four more identical copies of the same pair of eyes. To two pairs of these eyes part of a nose has been added; in one case, it is turned to the right and in the other to the left. To each of the second two pairs of eyes the upper part of the head has been added, similarly turned in different directions. All four pairs of eyes, it will be observed, have lost their primary point of vision and look to the right or the left, in accordance with the added features.

To change the features may not merely alter the apparent direction of the eyes, it may also entirely modify their expression. A very striking proof of this is seen in Figs. 5 and 6.

In the female face (Fig. 5), turned downwards, there is a look of "inquisitive archness" which, when the lower part is altered, as in Fig. 6, is transformed into a look of "devout abstraction." Here, again, it is almost impossible to believe that the eyes are really the same in both instances.

The influence which the general perspective of a pictured face has on the apparent direction of the eyes enables us to understand why the eyes of a portrait which look at us when we are in front of it appear to follow us whenever we move. We try to avoid their scrutiny in vain, a fact which many a novelist has turned to account, when the hero or the villain of the piece finds himself alone at midnight in a picture-gallery.

In the case of a living person or of any solid object, we get totally different views as we move from a front to a side view of it. Naturally, this cannot be so with a picture which is represented on a flat surface. From whatever point we look at it, we must see the same image, or figure, because there is nothing else to see. If, therefore, the eyes look at us when we are in front of it, they must necessarily still look at us in whatever position we place ourselves. Viewed from any oblique angle the face will, of course, appear narrower than if viewed from the front, but it will be narrowed uniformly and the iris will still be in the centre of the eye. Any foreshortened object or figure in the foreground of a picture will similarly appear to turn round and follow us as we change our point of view.

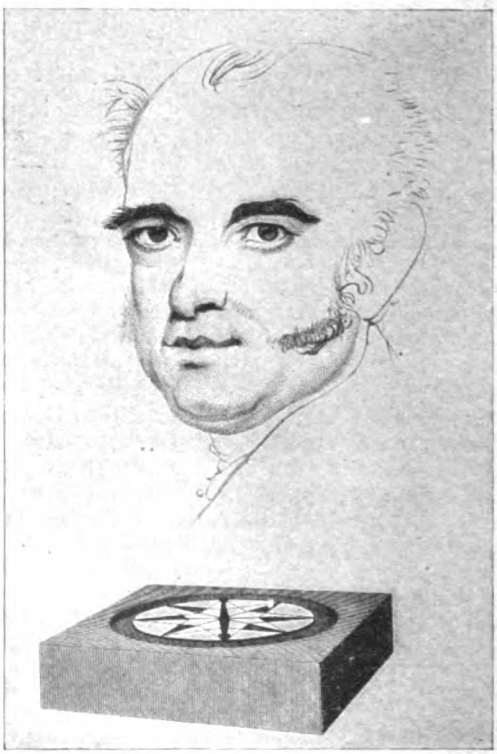


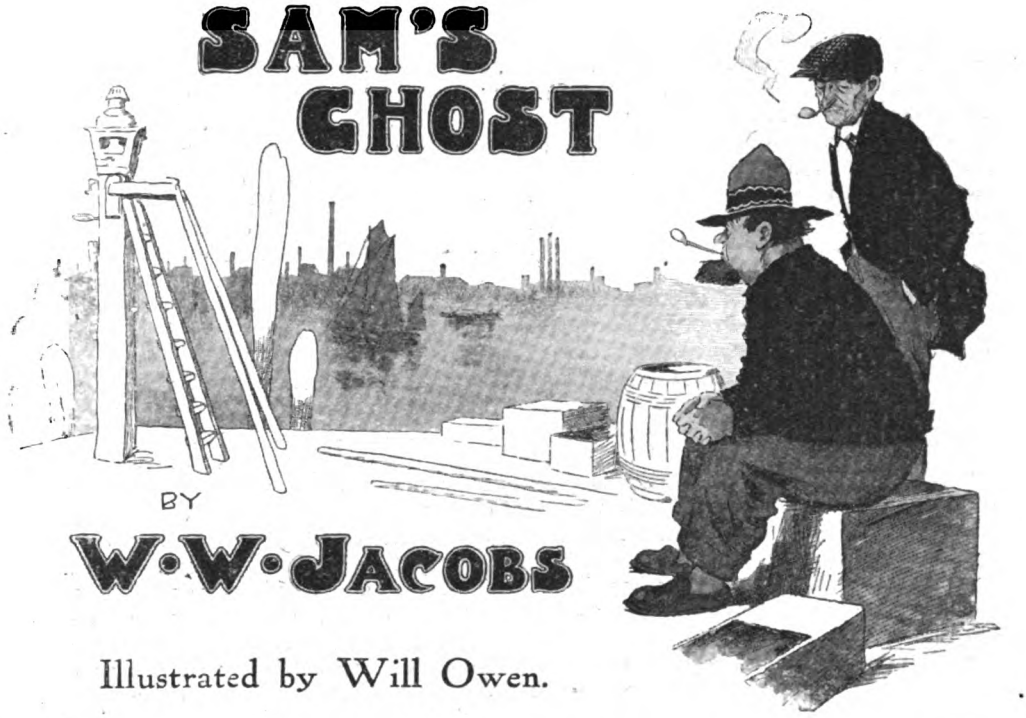
FIG. 7.

The eyes and the compass-needle follow the spectator from all points of view.

"When we see two objects on the ground directly in front of us, in the same line of vision but at some distance from each other, one will appear and can only be represented in a picture as directly above the other. The line joining them will be a vertical line on the canvas, and it will appear vertical to us, however far we move to one side or the other."

In Fig. 7—it is the same pair of eyes as in Fig. 4—the face is looking at the spectator and will continue to look at him, whichever way he turns. At the bottom a compass is represented in a square box. The sides of the box follow the same direction as the nose, and the needle is set parallel to the direction in which the eyes are looking—that is to say, it is represented in perspective, in this case by a short upright line. From whatever side we may view the picture, both the eyes and the compass-needle will give us the illusion that they are following us.

SAM'S GHOST



BY

W. W. JACOBS

Illustrated by Will Owen.

YES, I know, said the night-watchman, thoughtfully, as he sat with a cold pipe in his mouth gazing across the river. I've 'eard it afore. People tell me they don't believe in ghosts and make a laugh of 'em, and all I say is: let them take on a night-watchman's job. Let 'em sit 'ere all alone of a night with the water lapping against the posts and the wind moaning in the corners; especially if a pal of theirs has slipped overboard, and there is little nasty bills stuck up just outsi e in the High Street offering a reward for the body. Twice men 'ave fallen overboard from this jetty, and I've 'ad to stand my watch here the same night, and not a farthing more for it.

One of the worst and artfullest ghosts I ever 'ad anything to do with was Sam Bullet. He was a waterman at the stairs near by 'ere; the sort o' man that 'ud get you to pay for drinks, and drink yours up by mistake arter he 'ad finished his own. The sort of man that 'ad always left his baccy-box at 'ome, but always 'ad a big pipe in 'is pocket.

He fell overboard off of a lighter one evening, and all that his mates could save was 'is cap. It was only two nights afore that he 'ad knocked down an old man and bit a policeman's little finger to the bone, so that, as they pointed out to the widder, p'r'aps he was taken for a wise purpose. P'r'aps he was 'appier where he was than doing six months.

"He was the sort o' chap that'll make himself 'appy *anywhere*," ses one of 'em, comforting-like.

"Not without me," ses Mrs. Bullet, sobbing, and wiping her eyes on something she used for a pocket-hankercher. "He never could bear to be away from me. Was there no last words?"

"Only one," ses one o' the chaps, Joe Peel by name.

"As 'e fell overboard," ses the other.

Mrs. Bullet began to cry agin, and say wot a good 'usband he 'ad been. "Seventeen years come Michaelmas," she ses, "and never a cross word. Nothing was too good for me. Nothing. I 'ad only to ask to 'ave."

"Well, he's gorn now," ses Joe, "and we thought we ought to come round and tell you."

"So as you can tell the police," ses the other chap.

That was 'ow I came to hear of it fust; a policeman told me that night as I stood outside the gate 'aving a quiet pipe. *He* wasn't

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shedding tears; his only idea was that Sam 'ad got off too easy.

"Well, well," I ses, trying to pacify 'im, "he won't bite no more fingers; there's no policemen where he's gorn to."

He went off grumbling and telling me to be careful, and I put my pipe out and walked up and down the wharf thinking. On'y a month afore I 'ad lent Sam fifteen shillings on a gold watch and chain wot he said an uncle 'ad left 'im. I wasn't wearing it because 'e said 'is uncle wouldn't like it, but I 'ad it in my pocket, and I took it out under one of the lamps and wondered wot I ought to do.

My fust idea was to take it to Mrs. Bullet, and then, all of a sudden, the thought struck me: "*Suppose he 'adn't come by it honest?*"

I walked up and down agin, thinking. If he 'adn't, and it was found out, it would blacken his good name and break 'is pore wife's 'eart. That's the way I looked at it, and for his sake and 'er sake I determined to stick to it.

I felt 'appier in my mind when I 'ad decided on that, and I went round to the Bear's Head and 'ad a pint. Arter that I 'ad another, and then I come back to the wharf and put the watch and chain on and went on with my work.

Every time I looked down at the chain on my waistcoat it reminded me of Sam. I looked on to the river and thought of 'im going down on the ebb. Then I got a sort o' lonesome feeling standing on the end of the jetty all alone, and I went back to the Bear's Head and 'ad another pint.

They didn't find the body, and I was a'most forgetting about Sam when one evening, as I was sitting on a box waiting to get my breath back to 'ave another go at sweeping, Joe Peel, Sam's mate, came on to the wharf to see me.

He came in a mysterious sort o' way that I didn't like: looking be'ind 'im as though he was afraid of being follered, and speaking in a whisper as if 'e was afraid of being heard. He wasn't a man I liked, and I was glad that the watch and chain was stowed safe away in my trowsis-pocket.

"I've 'ad a shock, watchman," he ses.

"Oh!" I ses.

"A shock wot's shook me all up," he ses, working up a shiver. "I've seen something wot I thought people never could see, and wot I never want to see agin. *I've seen Sam!*"

I thought a bit afore I spoke. "Why, I thought he was drownded," I ses.

"So 'e is," ses Joe. "When I say I've seen 'im I mean that I have seen his *ghost!*"

He began to shiver agin, all over.

"Wot was it like?" I ses, very calm.

"Like Sam," he ses, rather short.

"When was it?" I ses.

"Last night, at a quarter to twelve," he ses. "It was standing at my front door waiting for me."

"And 'ave you been shivering like that ever since?" I ses.

"Worse than that," ses Joe, looking at me very 'ard. "It's wearing off now. The ghost gave me a message for you."

I put my 'and in my trowsis-pocket and looked at 'im. Then I walked, very slow, towards the gate.

"It gave me a message for you," ses Joe, walking beside me. "'We was always pals, Joe,'" it ses, "'you and me, and I want you to pay up fifteen bob for me wot I borrowed off of Bill the watchman. I can't rest until it's paid,' it ses. So here's the fifteen bob, watchman."

He put his 'and in 'is pocket and takes out fifteen bob and 'olds it out to me.

"No, no," I ses. "I can't take your money, Joe Peel. It wouldn't be right. Pore Sam is welcome to the fifteen bob—I don't want it."

"You must take it," ses Joe. "The ghost said if you didn't it would come to me agin and agin till you did, and I can't stand any more of it."

"I can't 'elp your troubles," I ses.

"You must," ses Joe. "'Give Bill the fifteen bob,' it ses, 'and he'll give you a gold watch and chain wot I gave 'im to mind till it was paid.'"

I see his little game then. "Gold watch and chain," I ses, laughing. "You must ha' misunderstood it, Joe."

"I understood it right enough," ses Joe, getting a bit closer to me as I stepped outside the gate. "Here's your fifteen bob; are you going to give me that watch and chain?"

"Sartainly not," I ses. "I don't know wot you mean by a watch and chain. If I 'ad it and I gave it to anybody, I should give it to Sam's widder, not to you."

"It's nothing to do with 'er," ses Joe, very quick. "Sam was most pertikler about that."

"I expect you dreamt it all," I ses. "Where would pore Sam get a gold watch and chain from? And why should 'e go to you about it? Why didn't 'e come to me? If 'e thinks I 'ave got it let 'im come to me."

"All right, I'll go to the police-station," ses Joe.

"I'll come with you," I ses. "But 'ere's a policeman coming along. Let's go to 'im."

I moved towards 'im, but Joe hung back, and, arter using one or two words that would ha' made any ghost ashamed to know 'im, he sheered off. I 'ad a word or two with the policeman about the weather, and then I went inside and locked the gate.

My idea was that Sam 'ad told Joe about the watch and chain afore he fell overboard. Joe was a nasty customer, and I could see that I should 'ave to be a bit careful. Some men might ha' told the police about it—but I never cared much for them. They're like kids in a way, always asking questions—most of which you can't answer.

It was a little bit creepy all alone on the wharf that night. I don't deny it. Twice I thought I 'eard something coming up on tip-toe behind me. The second time I was so nervous that I began to sing to keep my spirits up, and I went on singing till three of the hands of the *Susan Emily*, wot was lying alongside, came up from the fo'c'sle and offered to fight me. I was thankful when daylight came.

Five nights arterwards I 'ad the shock of my life. It was the fust night for some time that there was no craft up. A dark night, and a nasty moaning sort of a wind. I 'ad just lighted the lamp at the corner of the warehouse, wot 'ad blown out, and was sitting down to rest afore putting the ladder away, when I 'appened to look along the jetty and saw a head coming up over the edge of it. In the light of the lamp I saw the dead white face of Sam Bullet's ghost making faces at me.

I just caught my breath, sharp like, and then I turned and ran for the gate like a race-horse. I 'ad left the key in the padlock, in case of anything happening, and I just gave it one turn, flung the wicket open and slammed it in the ghost's face, and tumbled out into the road.

I ran slap into the arms of a young policeman wot was passing. Nasty, short-tempered chap he was, but I don't think I was more glad to see anybody in my life. I hugged 'im till 'e nearly lost 'is breath, and then he sat me down on the kerb-stone and asked me wot I meant by it.

Wot with the excitement and the running I couldn't speak at fust, and when I did he said I was trying to deceive 'im.

"There ain't no such thing as ghosts," he ses; "you've been drinking."

"It came up out o' the river and run arter me like the wind," I ses.

"Why didn't it catch you, then?" he ses, looking me up and down and all round about. "Talk sense."

He went up to the gate and peeped in, and, arter watching a moment, stepped inside and walked down the wharf, with me follering. It was my dooty; besides, I didn't like being left all alone by myself.

Twice we walked up and down and all over the wharf. He flashed his lantern into all the dark corners, into empty barrels and boxes, and then he turned and flashed it right into my face and shook his 'ead at me.

"You've been having a bit of a lark with me," he ses, "and for two pins I'd take you. Mind, if you say a word about this to anybody, I will."

He stalked off with his 'ead in the air, and left me all alone in charge of a wharf with a ghost on it. I stayed outside in the street, of course, but every now and then I fancied I heard something moving about the other side of the gate, and once it was so distinct that I run along to the Bear's Head and knocked 'em up and asked them for a little brandy, for illness.

I didn't get it, of course; I didn't expect to; but I 'ad a little conversation with the landlord from 'is bedroom-winder that did me more good than the brandy would ha' done. Once or twice I thought he would 'ave fallen out, and many a man has 'ad his licence taken away for less than a quarter of wot 'e said to me that night. Arter he thought he 'ad finished and was going back to bed agin, I pointed out to 'im that he 'adn't kissed me "good night," and if it 'adn't ha' been for 'is missis and two grown-up daughters and the potman I believe he'd ha' talked to me till daylight.

'Ow I got through the rest of the night I don't know. It seemed to be twenty nights instead of one, but the day came at last, and when the hands came on at six o'clock they found the gate open and me on dooty same as usual.

I slept like a tired child when I got 'ome, and arter a steak and onions for dinner I sat down and lit my pipe and tried to think wot was to be done. One thing I was quite certain about: I wasn't going to spend another night on that wharf alone.

I went out arter a bit, as far as the Clarendon Arms, for a breath of fresh air, and I 'ad just finished a pint and was wondering whether I ought to 'ave another, when Ted Dennis came in, and my mind was made up. He 'ad been in the Army all 'is life, and, so far, he 'ad never seen anything that 'ad frightened 'im. I've seen him myself take

on men twice 'is size just for the love of the thing, and, arter knocking them silly, stand 'em a pint out of 'is own pocket. When I asked 'im whether he was afraid of ghosts he laughed so 'ard that the landlord came from the other end of the bar to see wot was the matter.

I stood Ted a pint, and arter he 'ad finished it I told 'im just how things was. I didn't say anything about the watch and chain, because there was no need to, and when we came outside agin I 'ad engaged an assistant-watchman for ninepence a night.

"I SAW THE DEAD WHITE FACE OF SAM BULLET'S GHOST MAKING FACES AT ME."

"All you've got to do," I ses, "is to keep me company. You needn't turn up till eight o'clock of a night, and you can leave 'arf an hour afore me in the morning."

"Right-o!" ses Ted. "And if I see the ghost I'll make it wish it 'ad never been born."

It was a load off of my mind, and I went 'ome and ate a tea that made my missis talk about the work'ouse, and orstritches in 'uman shape wot would eat a woman out of 'ouse and 'ome if she would let 'em.

I got to the wharf just as it was striking six, and at a quarter to seven the wicket was pushed open gentle and the ugly head of Mr. Joe Peel was shoved inside.

"Hullo!" I ses. "Wot do you want?"

"I want to save your life," he ses, in a solemn voice. "You was within a inch of death last night, watchman."

"Oh!" I ses, careless-like. "'Ow do you know!"

"The ghost o' Sam Bullet told me," ses Joe. "Arter it 'ad chased you up the wharf screaming for 'elp, it came round and told me all about it."

"It seems fond of you," I ses. "I wonder why?"

"It was in a terrible temper," ses Joe, "and its face was awful to look at. 'Tell the watchman,' it ses, 'that if he don't give you the watch and chain I shall appear to 'im agin and kill 'im.'"

"All right," I ses, looking behind me to where three of the 'ands of the *Daisy* was

sitting on the fo'c'sle smoking. "I've got plenty of company to-night."

"Company won't save you," ses Joe. "For the last time, are you going to give me that watch and chain, or not? Here's your fifteen bob."

"No," I ses; "even if I 'ad got it I shouldn't give it to you; and it's no use giving it to the ghost, because, being made of air, he 'asn't got anywhere to put it."

"Very good," ses Joe, giving me a black look. "I've done all I can to save you, but if you won't listen to sense, you won't. You'll see Sam Bullet agin, and you'll not on'y lose the watch and chain but your life as well."

"All right," I ses, "and thank you kindly, but I've got an assistant, as it 'appens—a man wot wants to see a ghost."

"An assistant?" ses Joe, staring.

"An old soldier," I ses. "A man wot likes trouble and danger. His idea is to shoot the ghost and see wot 'appens."

"*Shoot!*" ses Joe. "Shoot a pore 'armless ghost. Does he want to be 'ung? Ain't it enough for a pore man to be drownded, but wot you must try and shoot 'im arterwards? Why, you ought to be ashamed o' yourself. Where's your 'art?"

"It won't be shot if it don't come on my wharf," I ses. "Though I don't mind if it does when I've got somebody with me. I ain't afraid of anything living, and I don't mind ghosts when there's two of us. Besides which, the noise of the pistol 'll wake up 'arf the river."

"You take care *you* don't get woke up," ses Joe, 'ardly able to speak for temper.

He went off stamping, and grinding 'is teeth, and at eight o'clock to the minute, Ted Dennis turned up with 'is pistol and helped me take care of the wharf. Happy as a skylark 'e was, and to see him 'iding behind a barrel with his pistol ready, waiting for the ghost, a'most made me forget the expense of it all.

It never came near us that night, and Ted was a bit disappointed next morning as he took 'is ninepence and went off. Next night was the same, and the next, and then Ted gave up hiding on the wharf for it, and sat and snoozed in the office instead.

A week went by, and then another, and still there was no sign of Sam Bullet's ghost, or Joe Peel, and every morning I 'ad to try and work up a smile as I shelled out ninepence for Ted. It nearly ruined me, and, worse than that, I couldn't explain why I was short to the missis. Fust of all she asked me *wot* I was spending it on, then she asked me *who* I was spending it on. It nearly broke up my 'ome—she did smash one kitchen-chair and a vase off the parlour mantelpiece—but I wouldn't tell 'er, and then, led away by some men on strike at Smith's wharf, Ted went on strike for a bob a night.

That was arter he 'ad been with me for three weeks, and when Saturday came, of course I was more short than ever, and people came and stood at their doors all the way down our street to listen to the missis taking my character away.

I stood it as long as I could, and then, when 'er back was turned for 'arf a moment, I slipped out. While she'd been talking I'd been thinking, and it came to me clear as daylight that there was no need for me to sacrifice myself any longer looking arter a dead man's watch and chain.

I didn't know exactly where Joe Peel lived, but I knew the part, and arter peeping into seven public-'ouses I see the man I wanted sitting by 'imself in a little bar. I walked in quiet-like, and sat down opposite 'im.

"Morning," I ses.

Joe Peel grunted.

"'Ave one with me?" I ses.

He grunted agin, but not quite so fierce, and I fetched the two pints from the counter and took a seat alongside of 'im.

"I've been looking for you," I ses.

"Oh!" he ses, looking me up and down and all over. "Well, you've found me now."

"I want to talk to you about the ghost of pore Sam Bullet," I ses.

Joe Peel put 'is mug down sudden and looked at me fierce. "Look 'ere! don't you come and try to be funny with me," he ses. "'Cos I won't 'ave it."

"I don't want to be funny," I ses. "Wot I want to know is, are you in the same mind about that watch and chain as you was the other day?"

He didn't seem to be able to speak at fust, but arter a time 'e gives a gasp. "Wot's the game?" he ses.

"Wot I want to know is, if I give you that watch and chain for fifteen bob, will that keep the ghost from 'anging round my wharf agin?" I ses.

"Why, o' course," he ses, staring; "but you ain't been seeing it agin, 'ave you?"

"I've not, and I don't want to," I ses. "If it wants you to 'ave the watch and chain, give me the fifteen bob, and it's yours."

He looked at me as if he couldn't believe 'is eyesight for a moment, and then 'e puts his 'and into 'is trowsis-pocket and pulls out one shilling and fourpence, 'arf a clay-pipe, and a bit o' lead-pencil.

"That's all I've got with me," he ses. "I'll owe you the rest. You ought to ha' took the fifteen bob when I 'ad it."

There was no 'elp for it, and arter making 'im swear to give me the rest o' the money when 'e got it, and that I shouldn't see the ghost agin, I 'anded the things over to 'im and came away. He came to the door to see me off, and if ever a man looked puzzled, 'e did. Pleased at the same time.

It was a load off of my mind. My conscience told me I'd done right, and arter sending a little boy with a note to Ted Dennis to tell 'im not to come any more, I felt 'appier than I 'ad done for a long time. When I got to the wharf that evening it seemed like a diff'rent place, and I was whistling and smiling over my work quite in my old way, when the young policeman passed.

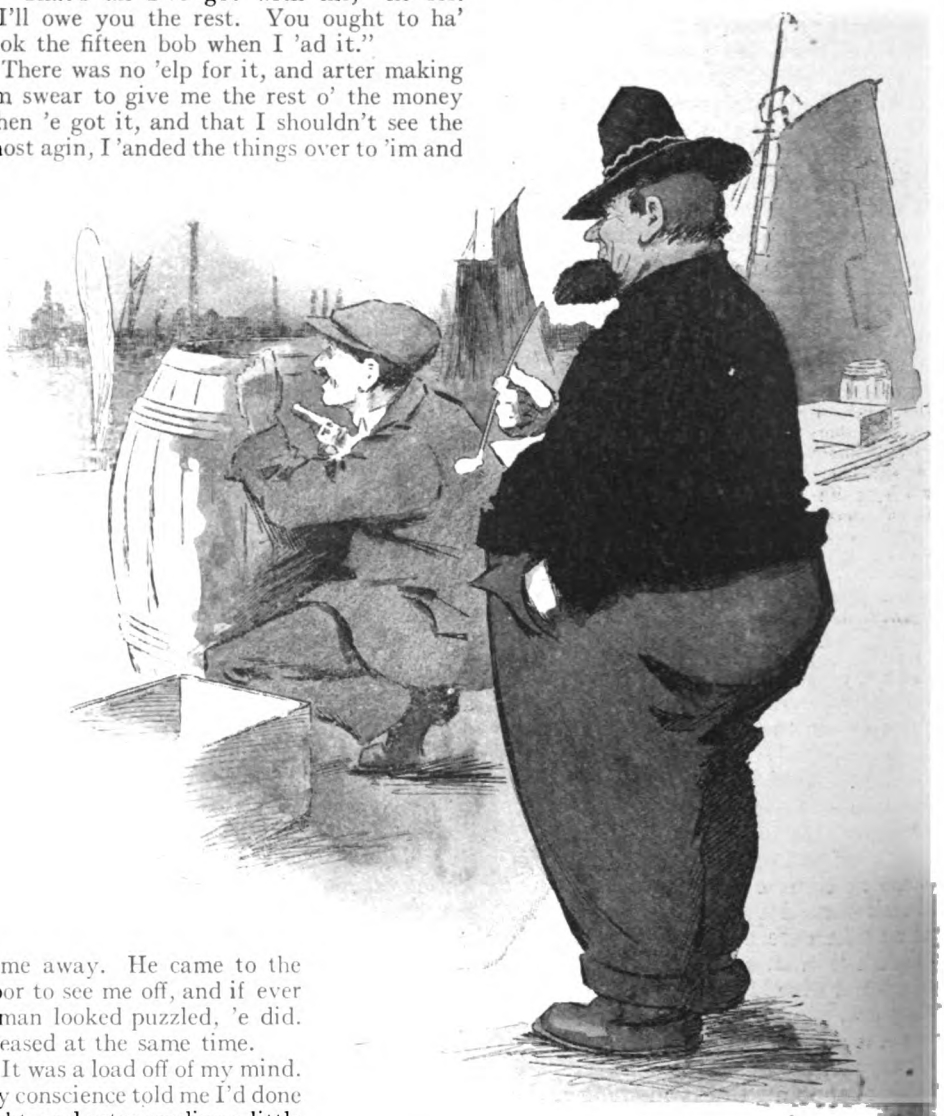
"Hullo!" he ses. "'Ave you seen the ghost agin?"

"I 'ave not," I ses, drawing myself up. "'Ave you?"

"No," he ses. "We missed it."

"Missed it?" I ses.

"Yes," he ses, nodding. "The day arter you came out screaming, and cuddling me like a frightened baby, it shipped as A.B. on the barque *Ocean King*, for Valparaiso. We missed it by a few hours. Next time you see a ghost, knock it down fust and go and cuddle the police arterwards."



"TO SEE HIM 'IDING BEHIND A BARREL WITH HIS PISTOL READY WAITING FOR THE GHOST, A'MOST MADE ME FORGET THE EXPENSE OF IT ALL."

MULTUM IN PARVO.

A COMPENDIUM OF SHORT ARTICLES.

IS YOUR FOOD PURE?

HOW TO DETECT ADULTERATION.

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY S. LEONARD BASTIN.

In these days of high prices the purity of food is a matter which should receive first consideration. More than ever there is a great danger of adulteration, and everyone should be on the watch. Happily, with most of the common frauds it is possible to apply some simple test which will reveal the "doctored" article. Take, for instance, the case of milk. It is quite easy to discover whether a sample is of good quality. Place a small quantity in a vessel, and then dip into it a bright, and rather stout, knitting needle (Fig. 1). Draw this out and hold slantwise, watching the result. If the milk streams slowly down the shining side of the needle, and only forms a drop after a considerable interval, we may take it that the milk has not been adulterated with water. On the other hand, where water has been added, the milk runs rapidly down the needle, forms a drop quickly, and this, almost as soon as it appears, falls away. Where the result of this test is unsatisfactory, it is not possible in every case to say that water has been added to the milk. Badly-fed cows sometimes give milk which is of such a poor quality that it might well have been watered. Anyhow, it is a wise plan to change your milkman if you are not satisfied.

FIG. 1.

How many people know the way in which to tell the condition of an egg without breaking it? Yet the plan is very simple. Go into a dark room with a candle and hold the egg between your eyes and the light. A new-laid egg will show an air space at the thick end (Fig. 2). After a few days of keeping this space fills up, and the egg presents a uniform appearance. It is then quite good, but cannot be described as new-laid. In the case of a bad egg, a spotty appearance is to be observed when the object is held up to the light.

FIG. 2.

High-grade flour is expensive, and bakers are tempted to use an inferior quality. To mask this, and also to meet the demand of the public for white bread, alum is used. Yet alum is really a very harmful ingredient, especially in the case of children and those who have a weak digestion. To find out whether your bread has alum in it, get the chemist to make you up a small quantity of carbonate of ammonia. Put a sample of the bread in a saucer, and pour the solution over it (Fig. 3). If alum is present the bread will turn black, but it will not change in colour if it is pure. Then, again, are you getting the best value from your bread? Some bakers add an undue amount of salt in order to make the bread heavy. Salt, of course, takes up a large amount of moisture from the atmosphere, and quite a considerable amount may be added without affecting the flavour of the bread. An

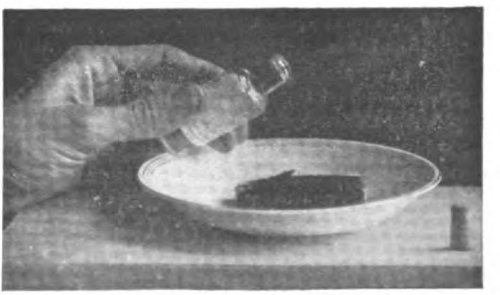


FIG. 3.

interesting little experiment is possible to determine which is really the heavier (after the moisture has gone) of two loaves of bread. Cut a sample from each, and balance these on a pair of scales (Fig. 4). Then bake the pieces in an oven for half an hour until they are quite dry. Weigh again, and the heavier sample will be the better value.

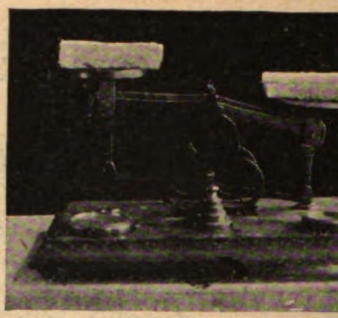


FIG. 4.

Probably the commonest way of dealing with tea is to colour the inferior quality; but it is easy to spot the fraud. Rub some of the dry leaves between a white cloth. If the tea has been doctored it will leave a brown stain; if it is pure this will not happen (Fig. 5). In the case of coffee a pretty little experiment is possible. Get a tumbler of water, and sprinkle half a teaspoonful of the grains on the top (Fig. 6). Pure coffee floats for a long time on the surface and does not discolour the water. Adulterated coffee starts to sink (or, at any rate, the additions do), and these, as they fall, make the water a yellow colour. It should be borne in mind that chicory grains would largely sink in the manner described, although a *limited* amount of this substance is a legitimate addition to coffee.

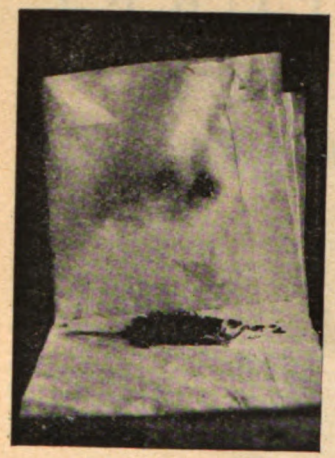


FIG. 5.

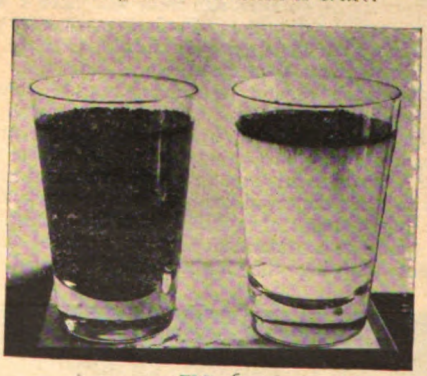


FIG. 6.

The spoon test for butter is considered to be very reliable. Indeed, it is widely used by inspectors. Take a large spoon, and into this place a sample of the butter about the size of the top of the little finger. Hold this over a burner (Fig. 7). In the case of pure butter the sample will boil quietly, producing a large quantity of bubbles. If the substance is margarine or a worked-up butter it will make a great deal of spluttering and crackling. Indeed, the noise has been likened to that which

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the jam with water; then strain away the solid part through muslin. Place in a glass vessel and add about an equal quantity of alcohol (Fig. 9). If the jam is pure, little change will take place; should glucose have been added, a dense white settlement is noticeable after an interval. A great deal of jam is dyed—probably far more than the public have any idea of. The dye employed may be harmful, or it may be innocuous. In any case, it will probably have been used to hide a bad article. Mix a sample of the jam with an equal quantity of water; then throw a piece of cotton-wool into it and boil (Fig. 10). Afterwards try to wash the stain away from the wool. If the jam is pure, the colour will soon go away; if some dye has been used, it will be practically impossible to get the wool white, no matter what we may do.

FIG. 10.

THE CENTENARY OF TROUSERS.

WE celebrate this year the centenary of the general adoption of trousers. Before 1815 they were not considered to be in good taste, and it is said that the Duke of Wellington was denied admission to Almack's, the most exclusive assembly in London in 1814, because he was wearing trousers, and that he had to return home and change to the more courtly costume of knee breeches and silk stockings before he could enter that glittering saloon.

1.—A CARICATURE OF THE FASHIONS OF 1801. THE EARLIEST ILLUSTRATION OF TROUSERS.

It is often asserted that trousers were invented by the Duke of Wellington, but this is an error. They were the dress of the planter in India, where he had recently commanded, and he may have helped to introduce them into this country. But it is certain that he invented a variety of pantaloon, which laced up the side over the boot in order to allow of easier access to wounds on the leg.

The earliest instance we have been able to trace of the trousers as we know them to-day is the caricature of 1801 here reproduced (1), but in 1807, as our illustration (2) shows, they were honoured with a place in a book of fashions, with the following remarks:—

"Although the kerseymere breeches and pantaloons with boots continue to be much worn at present, we doubt not but if the warm weather continues gentlemen will readily leave them off for the lighter dress of nankeen pantaloons and trousers." So that it would

2.—TROUSERS AS DEPICTED IN A FASHION-BOOK OF 1807.

seem that they were, at first, only warm weather or summer attire.

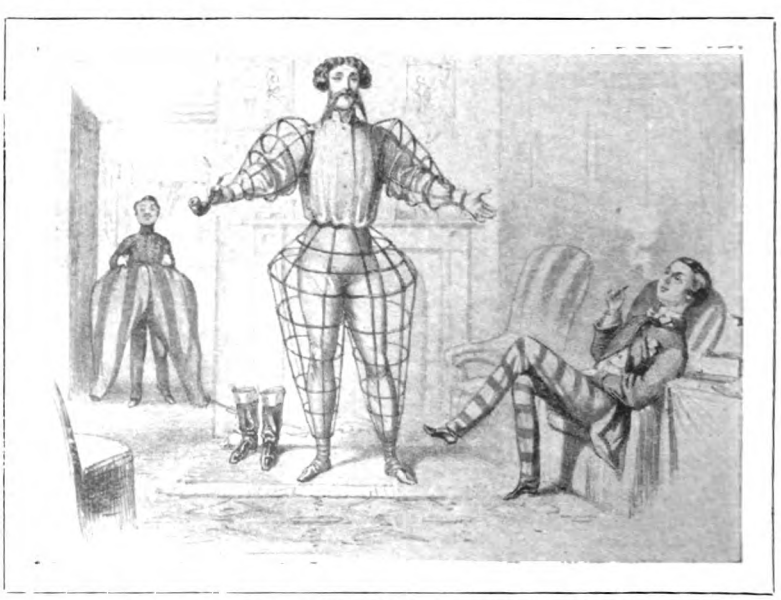
At Cambridge, in 1812, trousers were taboo. Students who attended class or chapel in them were marked "non-present," and fined accordingly. They were, however, gaining a hold on fashion, and in 1815 had become the mode, as is shown in

3.—AS SEEN BY A SATIRIST OF 1827.

4.—"OUR FATHERS AND OUR HUSBANDS."—AN INTERESTING CONTRAST OF 1860.

Cruikshank's caricature of the next year. A still more exaggerated form is seen in the satire of 1827, "A Young Poodle," here reproduced (3).

In the engraving "Our Fathers and Our Husbands" (4) is shown the contrast between the "peg-tops" of the swell of 1860 and the buckskins and tops of the Regency. Our last illustration (5) shows, jocularly, the spread of the crinoline mania, when mere man proposes to take advantage of the ladies' armour and still further expand his "peg-tops."



5.—A SATIRICAL PRINT OF THE CRINOLINE PERIOD.
"Well, Alec, old boy! what do you think Kate will say to this style?"

THE FINEST FEATS IN CHESS HISTORY.

BY H. WATTS.

OF brilliant chess conceptions in actual play it has been aptly said that "the most brilliant combinations are those which do not come off," because the other man sees and prevents them. It remains a matter of opinion as to which are the best of those which have materialized, but it will be generally admitted that the ten examples chosen to illustrate this article rank at least equal to any. To the majority of those players whose practice is limited to friendly games they will all be new, whilst to the student who knows some of them a review will be of interest, as even he may discover new features hitherto unnoticed.

The illustrations selected have been chosen, not as standard examples of master-play, but to show the beautiful possibilities of the game. Seven of the positions do arise out of master-play, whilst two illustrate how the expert will dispose of a weak defence when the opportunity occurs, and No. 8 is a sparkling game which shows that brilliant play is not confined to the masters.

The final, winning combination in a game of chess must dawn upon a player some moves before its actual achievement, and his remaining moves are directed towards bringing about the position he has foreseen or some variation of it, equally favourable. He cannot with absolute certainty foretell the actual finish unless his opponent's moves are all forced, but when his inspiration has come his moves are directed firstly to the accomplishment of his win, and secondly to prevent his opponent from making moves which defer or prevent his success. The positions selected show as nearly as possible the point at which the winning method was first seen, and to appreciate each move correctly it is best first to run through them quickly and then to go through the game a second time, studiously noting how each move by the winner brings nearer the desired end.

It is about sixty years since the advent of Morphy, the young American, to whom pre-eminence in chess power is most generally credited, and our first example is from one of his games. Perhaps his most famous and most brilliant game was played during the performance of "The Barber of Seville" in the Royal box at the Grand Opera House, Paris, against Duke Karl of Brunswick and Count Isouard, the latter two in consultation, but this game appeared in THE STRAND MAGAZINE in 1906, and repetition is unnecessary.

The example chosen, whilst more profound than the one mentioned above, is not quite so spectacular, and appeals more forcibly to the finished student. There are many niceties in the positions from move to move of which space does not permit the explanation, but which the player will readily appreciate upon careful examination. This game was played in the "First American Tournament," although some writers credit it with being but a casual game. Morphy's opponent (Louis Paulsen) was destined to become a recognized master and one of the strongest players of his time. This diagram shows the position after White's 17th move, and the game proceeded thus :—

MORPHY (Black) to move.

PAULSEN (White).

WHITE.	BLACK.	WHITE.	BLACK.
17.	Q x B	24. K—R 1	B x P
18. P x Q	K—Kt 3, ch	25. Q—K B 1	B x Q
19. K—R 1	B—R 6	26. R x B	R—K 7
20. R—Q 1	B—Kt 7, ch	27. R—R 1	R—R 3
21. K—Kt 1	Q B x P, dis. ch	28. P—Q 4	B—K 6
22. K—B 1	B—Kt 7, ch	29. Resigns	
23. K—Kt 1	B—R 6, ch		

It may be noted that Black was threatening a simple mate in two moves, and that White's last move was 17. Q—R 6 to prevent this. He should have played 17. Q—Q 1, but he is to be excused for not seeing the brilliant sacrifice his opponent had prepared. In the subsequent play Black is continually threatening mate, and White's moves are mostly forced, but Steinitz showed a shorter and more elegant finish than the one adopted, as follows (best moves only suggested for White) :—

WHITE.	BLACK.	WHITE.	BLACK.
22.	R—Kt 7	24. K—Kt 1	R—Kt 7, ch
(threatening mate in two moves)		25. K moves	R—Kt 8, mate
23. Q—Q 3	R x B P, ch		

Bauer has also pointed out another pretty "short mate" overlooked by Morphy as follows :—

WHITE.	BLACK.	WHITE.	BLACK.
23.	B—K 5, ch	25. Q—K 2	B—R 6, ch
24. K—B 1	B—K B 4	26. K—K 1	R—Kt 8, mate

Notwithstanding these two minor omissions the authorities have been justly unanimous in their praise of Morphy's play in this game, Steinitz's appreciation being "One of the most charming poetical chess compositions that have ever been devised in actual play." Black must have seen his win clearly when making his 17th move, and a little time with the chessboard will show how complicated and beautiful many of the variations are.

Second only to Morphy for brilliant conceptions in actual play comes Blackburne, the veteran English champion. The first example of his skill is not a match game, but occurred in one of his simultaneous displays, and in this instance the game is given in full, as Blackburne (who was Black) commenced "being brilliant" so early.

WHITE.	BLACK.	WHITE.	BLACK.
1. P—K 4	P—K 4	8. Q x R	Q—R 5
2. Kt—K B 3	Kt—Q B 3	9. Castles	Kt—B 3
3. B—B 4	B—B 4	10. P—Q B 3 ?	Kt—Kt 5
4. B x P, ch	K x B	11. P—K R 3	B x P, ch
5. Kt x P, ch	Kt x Kt	12. K—R 1	B—K B 4
6. Q—R 5, ch	P—Kt 3	13. Q x R	Q x P, ch
7. Q x Kt	P—Q 3	14. P x Q	B x P, mate

This is not perfectly sound, but very nearly so. White's initial error was his double sacrifice, but after this his most serious blunder was at move 10. He should have at once endeavoured to get his queen away by 10. Q—Q 8. The game is a gem and shows Blackburne's great attacking powers to best advantage.

The next example is one of the most profound of Blackburne's many brilliant wins, and

BLACKBURNE (Black).

AMATEUR (White).

It will be noted that all Black's remaining pieces take an active part in the mate and that two of these are actually "en prise," one of them being pinned as well.

being played against a master in an important international tournament adds to its merit.

Black has just played Kt—B 5, ch, and the game went :—

WHITE.	BLACK.
26. Q x Kt ! !	B x Q
27. R x P ! !	P x R
28. R x P	

and Black resigned, for mate in three more moves cannot be avoided. Quite short, but as decisive as short. For how many moves the possibility of this actual finish was foreseen by Blackburne we must refer readers to the actual game, for he had to make several preparatory moves which could only have for their object the actual mate he so successfully accomplished. It was played at Berlin in 1881, where Blackburne won the first prize, his opponent in this game being Schwarz. Steinitz may also be quoted regarding this ending. He says : "The design of Mr. Blackburne's attack, in combination with the brilliant finish, belongs to the finest efforts of chess genius displayed in match play," and Steinitz was rarely so generous in his criticisms of his contemporaries.

SCHWARZ (Black).

BLACKBURNE (White) to move.

Another brilliant surprise brought off by Blackburne was *v.* Lipschutz at the New York Tournament of 1889. Black to make his 31st move played P—R 5, which move causes Blackburne aptly to quote Gray, "Unconscious of their doom the little victims play." The game proceeded :—

LIPSCHUTZ (Black).

BLACKBURNE (White) to move.

WHITE.	BLACK.
32. P—Kt 6	P—R 3
33. R x P, ch	K x R
34. Kt—R 5, ch	R x Kt
35. Q—B 7, ch	K—B 3
36. Q—Q 6, ch	

and White mates in three more moves, a simple task, which is left to the reader to discover.

It is recorded of this finish that White's 33rd move "came as a thunderbolt and caused the greatest excitement amongst the spectators, of whom Steinitz was one. He bent his head over the board, and would scarcely believe that a mating position had been created."

When the position shown in the diagram had been reached the loser was asked how his game was progressing, and he replied that White had some slight attack, but the queen side pawns must win, and even after seeing White's next move he still thought himself safe, but was soon to be disillusioned.

Tchigorin was undoubtedly one of the most brilliant players who ever lived, and the opportunity for what might have been the very finest combination ever conceived over the chess-board came about in one of his match games with his fellow-countryman, Schiffers.

In the early part of the game Tchigorin had lost his queen for two minor pieces as a result of some loose play. He engineered a strong attack, however, and brilliantly sacrificing a knight forced a draw by perpetual check.

TCHIGORIN (Black) to move.

SCHIFFERS (White).

WHITE.	BLACK.	WHITE.	BLACK.
14.	Kt—B 6, ch	19. K—Kt 1	B x B P
15. P x Kt	B x P, ch	20. Kt—Kt 3	Kt—K 2
16. K—Kt 2	B—R 6, ch	21. Q—K 3	B—B 3
17. K—R 1	B—K 4	22. Q x R P	
18. Q—K 1	B—Kt 5, ch		

Here Tchigorin played 22. P—Kt 3, and eventually exchanged knights and drew by perpetual check, but at this point he had a forced mate had he been able to fathom it. The remarkable thing is that Tchigorin did not see it, as he must have closely analyzed the position. The method of forcing the mate was discovered by Mr. Bernard Fison, and is as follows :—

WHITE.	BLACK.	WHITE.	BLACK.
22.	R—R 8, ch	25. K—Kt 3	Kt—B 4, ch
23. Kt x R	B—R 7, ch	26. K—B 4 or Kt 4	R—R 5, mate
24. K x B	R—R 1, ch		

It is a truly extraordinary position, and quite a unique occurrence in master-play. The finish is a problem of great depth and beauty, every move from Black's 14th being worthy of special study.

Our next example occurred at Vienna between two lesser-known players, Fahndrich and Mandelbaum, White and Black respectively. It is a characteristic result from a certain method of conducting one of the common openings, and at one time there was a crop of similar games (for there is fashion in chess-playing as in everything else), but none so fine as this specimen, which may be said to represent the ideal form.

Following the position shown in the diagram the moves were :—

MANDELBAUM (Black).

FAHNDRICH (White) to move.

WHITE.	BLACK.
11. B x P, ch !	K x B
12. Kt—Kt 5, ch	K—R 3
13. Kt—K 2	B x Kt
14. P x B, ch	K x P
15. Kt—Kt 3	P—Kt 3
16. Q—B 3	P—B 4
17. Q—B 4, ch	K—B 3
18. Q—K 5, ch	K—Kt 4
19. R—R 5, ch	P x R
20. Q—Kt 7, ch	K—R 5
21. Kt x P, ch	R x Kt
22. Q—Kt, 3 mate	

White required both pluck and foresight to sacrifice the first piece, particularly as some passive moves had to be made after this initial sacrifice, when White was already committed to his course and his boats already burned behind him.

The next specimen is well known to the student, but to the ordinary player who takes but a dilettante interest in chess perhaps it will be new. To everyone it will present fresh beauties by further inspection, and in such a collection as the present it must find place. "The Immortal Game" and "The Evergreen Game" are undoubtedly the two most famous games ever played. Every annotator has examined them and every chess authority has used them in some form. They present Anderssen's style as nothing else can do, and are truly typical of what is called "the old school" of chess tactics.

"The Immortal Game" was a King's Bishop's Gambit between Anderssen and Kieseritzski, in which the great German professor successfully conducted the White pieces, and but for the fact that this game also appeared in the before-mentioned article in this magazine its claim for inclusion could not be overlooked.

"The Evergreen Game" was an Evans Gambit in which Anderssen, again White, defeated Dufresne in equally brilliant style. The position has been so profoundly analyzed that there is no necessity for us to give more than the diagram and the line of play.

DUFRESNE (Black).

ANDERSSEN (White) to move.

WHITE.	BLACK.
17. Kt—B 6, ch	P x Kt
18. P x P	R—Kt 1
19. Q R—Q 1 !!	Q x Kt
20. R x Kt, ch !	Kt x R
21. Q x Q P, ch !!	K x Q
22. B—K B 5, ch	K—K 1
23. B—Q 7, ch	K—B 1 or Q 1
24. B x Kt, mate	

Exclusive as this article must needs be, it would be the poorer by the omission of this example. Both the games mentioned regularly found their way into "collections of games" published a decade ago, but there will be hundreds of players of to-day to whom these positions are unknown, and we strongly recommend readers who have not seen "The Immortal Game" to refer to THE STRAND MAGAZINE for 1906, where it will be found in full.

Another example which could not otherwise be denied inclusion in the present article also appears in the same number. This is the famous game between Zukertort and Blackburne in the 1883 London Tournament, in which the English champion was so brilliantly defeated. One would hardly expect a brilliancy to come off against Blackburne, himself so great an exponent of the art, but in this case he was defeated by one of the most brilliant combinations ever made.

In the next example we again give the game in full, as the early part evidences considerable skill on both sides. It is interesting also, as the winner was an amateur, and not one of the recognized masters. Critical positions abound throughout the game, despite its brevity, and the happy inspiration which disclosed the winning method has seldom been surpassed. The game is taken from a German publication, where the winner's name is given as —Ward, and the game goes as follows :—

WHITE.	BLACK.	WHITE.	BLACK.
1. P—K 4	P—K 4	10. K—K 2	Q—R 5
2. Kt—K B 3	Kt—Q B 3	11. R—B 1	Kt—B 7
3. B—B 4	B—B 4	12. Kt x P, dis. ch	K—R 1
4. P—B 3	Kt—B 3	13. P—Q 4	B x P
5. P—Q Kt 4	B—Kt 3	14. Kt—Q 2	B x P
6. Q—Kt 3	Castles	15. Q x B	Kt—Q 5, ch
7. Kt—Kt 5	B x P, ch	16. K—K 1	Kt—Q 6, dbl. ch
8. K—B 1	B—Kt 3	17. K—Q 1	Q—K 8, ch
9. Kt x B P	Kt x K P	18. R x Q	Kt—B 7, mate

—WARD (Black).

White.

From the above diagram it will be seen that Black's two knights are the only pieces taking part in the actual mate—a very unusual occurrence. One of these is "en prise." White has not lost a single piece, whereas Black has sacrificed a queen and a bishop.

It is not always the strongest players who are the most brilliant. The late W. H. K. Pollock, although by no means the first in rank among the masters, so frequently won important games at critical stages from the leaders that he achieved quite a reputation for this. This is the part usually played by the imaginative player, and it is only because he was firstly exceptionally imaginative, and secondly because this was backed up by great insight, strength, and steadiness when necessary, that Blackburne had such a successful career. Pollock had the imagination, but he lacked the other qualities to the same degree, and consequently his success was not so great. At the Hastings Tournament he was successful against Dr. Tarrasch and Steinitz, the fourth and fifth prizewinners, although he himself finished 19th only. His greatest feat, however, was at New York in 1889, where he defeated Weiss, the first prizewinner, in one of the finest games ever played, and for which he was awarded the special brilliancy prize.

At move 17 the position was as shown below :—

W. H. K. POLLOCK (Black) to play.

MAX WEISS (White).

and the play proceeded :—

WHITE.	BLACK.
17. . . .	B x P, ch
18. K—R 1	Q—K 8
19. P—R 3	Kt x B
20. R x Q	R x R, ch
21. K—R 2	B—Kt 8, ch
22. K—Kt 3	R—K 6, ch
23. K—Kt 4	Kt—K 7
24. Kt—B 1	P—Kt 3
25. Q—Q 5	P—R 4, ch
26. K—Kt 5	K—Kt 2
27. Kt x R	

and Black has a forced mate, in three moves, which will not greatly tax our readers' ingenuity to discover.

Hoffer claimed that this game was "worthy to rank with the few immortal games we possess," and Steinitz said that the game was one of the "most brilliant in the annals of practical play."

The concluding example is one about which some doubt exists. It is attributed both to Steinitz and to Rosenthal, but possibly more correctly, and certainly more generally, to the former.

The position is here given :—

STEINITZ OR ROSENTHAL (Black) to move.

White.

and the game went on :—

WHITE.	BLACK.
8. . . .	P—K R 4
9. Kt x Kt P	P—R 5
10. Kt x P	P x B
11. Kt x Q	B—K Kt 5
12. Q—Q 2	Kt—Q 5
13. P—K R 3	Kt—K 7, ch
14. K—R 1	R x P, ch
15. P x R	B—B 6, mate

It is possible this article will occasion criticism. Individual chess-players may prefer other brilliancies and claim their inclusion amongst the ten best, but this is largely a matter of opinion, especially with such an immense fund to draw from. For entertaining and spectacular chess these examples cannot be beaten, and such specimens as Mackenzie *v.* Mason, Schiffers *v.* Harmonist, Kolisch *v.* Paulsen, Marshall *v.* Lowtzsky (a modern example), examples of Bird's masterpieces, further specimens from Steinitz, or selections from the McDonnell and La Bourdonnais matches would be included if space and the number ten were elastic. If the criticism materializes it will be the better for chess, and will serve to make still more widely known the immense possibilities and the latent beauties of the chess-board, besides perpetuating some further positions of brilliant merit.

Brilliant play is not altogether a thing of the past, but chess-playing is a much more difficult accomplishment to-day; the average skill is greater and so much more is known about the game that brilliancy is rare. Occasional instances occur in modern first-class tournaments, and at some later date a further article with modern examples only would be of interest.

A DOWNY OLD BIRD.

ONE OF THE OLDEST PARROTS IN EXISTENCE.

BY CAPTAIN HERBERT C. KENT.

A COUPLE of years ago I called in at the Royal Hotel, Tom Ugly's Point, a small riverside village about eighteen miles from Sydney, New South Wales, and, while waiting for lunch to be prepared, noticed what seemed to be a bird-cage covered over with a grey shawl. Now and then I heard a kind of grunting noise from under the shawl, but that did not arouse my curiosity sufficiently to make me rise from my seat to inspect it. Presently, however, when perfect shrieks of smothered laughter were emitted, I rose with the intention of seeing what the cage contained; and as I drew back the shawl I was startled at seeing a large bird, almost completely devoid of feathers, on the perch, bobbing its head rapidly up and down. Its beak was curved inwards towards the body, and projected fully six inches from the lower bill. "Ha! ha! ha!" screamed this fantastic object. "Drat your eyes, I haven't a feather to fly with." "What's the matter, old chap?" I asked, sympathizingly. "Give me a biscuit! Can't you see I haven't a feather to fly with?" was the reply; and the bird stopped nodding, and, holding its bald head on one side, looked at me knowingly. I soon produced some biscuits from the table, and, after supplying the bird's immediate wants, went in search of someone who could tell me its history. Mrs. Bennet, the owner of both the bird and the hotel, kindly furnished me with the following facts.

TWO INCHES OF THIS EXTRAORDINARY BEAK HAVE TO BE CUT OFF EVERY TEN YEARS OR SO.

Mrs. Bennet has had the old cockatoo in her possession for over thirty years. It was given to her by an old sea captain, a relation, who had owned it over forty years, and it was a very old bird when he first gained possession of it, so its origin is lost in obscurity. Naturalists who have examined the bird consider it to be somewhere about a hundred and forty years old. "Old Cocky" has certainly been as good as a little gold-mine to its present owner, as numbers of people from various parts of the State join in the pilgrimage to Tom Ugly's Point to see and hold converse with this remarkable bird. Needless to say, it is taken very great care of. About every ten years some two inches of the beak has to be cut off, and Mrs. Bennet keeps, in a box, a large number of the pieces, aggregating over eighteen inches. The few words mentioned above do not constitute the whole of Cocky's vocabulary. On the contrary, its old sailor owner taught it many which are not to be found in either Bible or dictionary, but which I will not repeat, out of deference to my readers.

When I mounted the coach and started away from the house, the last sounds I heard were the weird shrieking laugh and the words: "Drat his eyes, he hasn't paid the bill!" Learned pundits may say that birds of the parrot tribe only repeat sounds mechanically, but if "Old Cocky" of Tom Ugly's Point does not mean every word he says, I'll eat my best hat.

THE FIRST CYCLE MADE FOR TWO,

OR

THE LOVERS' SOCIABLE.

THE hobby-horse having been invented or improved by Baron Drais in 1818, was introduced into England the same year, when exercise on the hobby or dandy horse became the rage. There are even illustrations and prospectuses extant of a hobby-horse academy off Regent Street, where grown people were taught to ride. The beau of a century ago would naturally not be long content to enjoy the delights of the "horse" by himself, so the machine the subject of our illustration was evolved by some unknown genius. The picture shows the form of the courser in too practical detail not to have been taken from an actual example, so that we may take it that this the first cycle made for two did actually exist, and we are confirmed in this by the opinion of an expert in the knowledge and history of cycles.

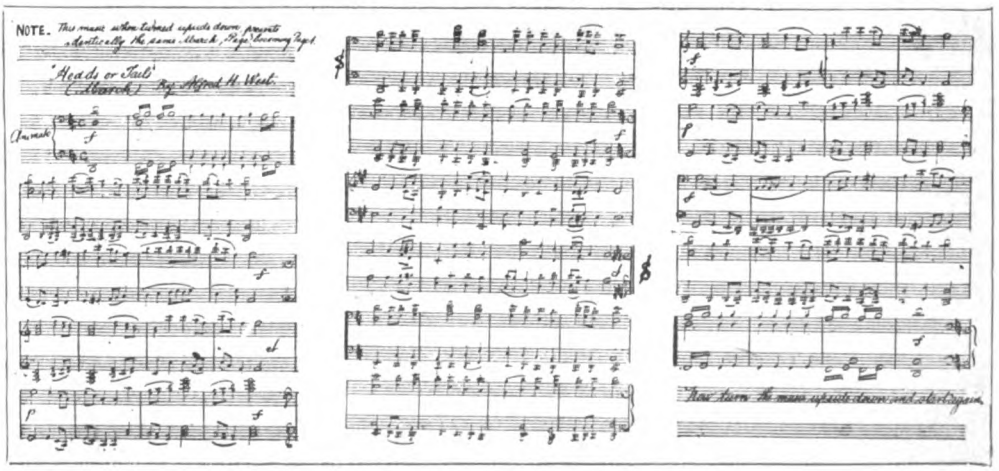
THE FIRST CYCLE MADE FOR TWO.

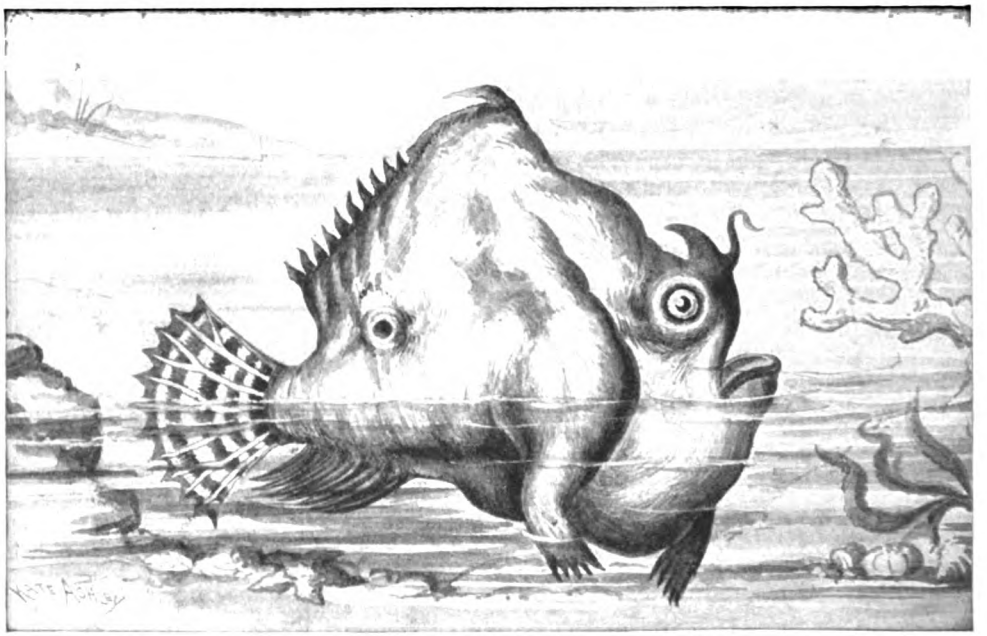
The gentleman must have been a good patron of the metal boot protectors of his day—if any—but doubtless felt himself amply rewarded by a smile from the charmer he is carrying in the seat before him.

It must have been a heavy task to propel the solidly-built machine even over smooth and level roads with the added weight of the fair lady, but what it must have been to push it and her up-hill can only be imagined.

REVERSIBLE MUSIC.

When you have played this march through, if you turn the music upside down and play it backwards, starting from the bottom of the third sheet, you will find yourself playing the same tune, as it reads exactly the same either way!





THE "WALKING FISH."

It sometimes seems as if Nature, by some strange freak, took a delight in producing quaint and grotesque creatures instead of those which are beautiful and harmonious, possibly in order to emphasize the beautiful by force of contrast. This must surely be the reason for the existence of the "Walking Fish," for it would be difficult to find a creature of more unattractive appearance. It is yellow in colour, with streaks and spots of brown. The carpal bones of this fish (the bones representing the wrist in man) are of extraordinary length, and have at their extremity short and powerful fins, stiff in substance and very muscular—more like claws than anything else—which are called the pectoral fins. Just above the snout may be seen the first dorsal spine, and immediately at the back of it the second ray, but there is a wide gap between this and the third ray, which forms a portion of the soft dorsal fin. The "Walking Fish" is a native of the Indian Ocean.

"BY OUR READERS."

1.—Trifles That Have Changed Lives.

EDGAR ALLAN POE in one of his stories tells how a man, who was sitting in his room waiting till the time came to keep an important appointment with an insurance company to renew the fire policy on his house which had expired the day before, amused himself by eating raisins and flipping the stalks about the room. As the time seemed to be passing very slowly, he got up to examine the clock, the glass face of which happened to be broken, when he found that one of the stalks had lodged in the key-hole and stopped the hands. It was then too late to renew the policy that day, and the same night his house was burnt to the ground.

Now, of course, an accident so extraordinary as this is of rare occurrence in real life. Nevertheless, almost every reader on looking back will find that the course of his life has often depended to some extent on an accident almost as trivial, if not quite so unusual. We ask our readers to send us stories of this kind.

2.—Animal Intelligence.

Every reader will remember Mr. Jingle's story of the dog who refused to enter a field in which appeared a notice to the effect that "The gamekeeper has orders to shoot all dogs found in this enclosure." Here is another story that used to be related by Lord James of Hereford:

"Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, when Ambassador in Madrid, had a Spanish dog, the best-bred creature in the world. One day its mistress had a visitor who engrossed her so much that she forgot the dog's dinner. He was too well conducted to scratch or whine, so he went out into the garden, bit off a flower, and came and laid it at her feet. The flower was a forget-me-not."

We now invite our readers to send us any stories of this kind as examples of extraordinary animal intelligence. As will be seen from the above examples, it is more essential that the stories should be strange than true.

All stories should be addressed to "Anecdotes," STRAND MAGAZINE Office, Southampton Street, Strand, London, and those found suitable will be published and paid for.

MR. MACIVOR RESENTS CHRISTMAS.

By L. FRANK TOOKER.

Illustrated by W. T. Benda.

I.

AS Mr. MacIvor rose from the breakfast-table in his club on a certain morning early in December, he was distinctly lonely and not a little disgruntled with life. The latter fact annoyed him; he felt it to be unreasonable. He had prospered, and in an unstudied way he looked prosperous. A man of fifty, with a clean-cut face of intelligence rather than of comeliness, gray eyes that sometimes laughed, though his mouth rarely did, he had also the appearance of one to be trusted. Yet there was about him the look of a man who lived for himself alone. It was not hardness or selfishness; rather, it was a look of atrophied human interests. One felt that the man had cut himself off from all but the superficial emotions of life.

In a way he had, though through no conscious fault of his own. Wholly without family ties, for years he had lived a solitary life at his club. A shy man, he had shrunk from obtruding himself upon others, and so life had passed him by. He was not aware of it, but something in the spirit of Christmas that draws hearts together and awakens a longing for home and friends had touched him and found him desolate.

As he descended the steps of the club into the cold, bracing air of a windless, sunshiny morning, he decided to walk to his office, and so set out at a brisk pace. The shop windows were brilliant with holiday gifts, and few people, he noticed, passed them without stopping. He told himself that there was no one in the wide world to whom he felt called upon to send even the meanest gift, no one who could even dream of expecting one from him.

"And a good thing, too," he thought, bitterly; "it's all waste—waste and foolishness." He hurried on.

But he could not hurry. Children blocked his way; grown people blocked it with their loitering, hawkers with their holiday novelties. A mechanical toy suddenly shot out from behind a group, and Mr. MacIvor had to sidestep to avoid treading on it.

"B-r-r-r-r!" he growled, angrily. Then he stopped short, a dazed look in his eyes. "Why, I'm a *Scrooge*, a regular *Scrooge!*" he muttered to himself. "That's what I am—a *Scrooge!*"

He turned into a side street, now walking slowly. He realized at last that loneliness was building up in his heart a wall of anger in its defence against the good will of the world. A forlorn old woman, with the face and manner of a professional beggar, reached out her hand toward him; in his momentary loss of mental poise Mr. MacIvor hastily dropped a shilling into it. Her Celtic blessing loudly followed him as he hurried away. The surprising thing about it was that it did him good. He felt a warm glow about his heart. He was keenly alive to the professional insincerity of her easy and familiar call upon Providence to lengthen his days with happiness, and yet his heart was in some way gladdened. In a manner it brought to him vividly the paucity of good wishes that had come to him, his aloofness from his fellowmen. Twenty minutes later he entered a shop to buy a Christmas gift.

In his search through his mental list of the few people to whom he might with any propriety send gifts he recalled the wife

of his brother in Canada. He had not seen her for years and he had always disliked her, but at least she might serve in a perfunctory way to awaken his heart to the spirit of Christmas. He resolved to send her a watch.

"Jane will be surprised," he told himself, with a grim smile, "and she may not care for a watch. Still, she was always grasping; she'll like the feel of the gold."

Something in the face of the girl who waited upon him attracted his interest, and in a shy, almost furtive way he studied her face with unwonted particularity. It was pretty and sweet and withal modest. She spoke in a low voice that had an unconscious ring of tenderness. It lingered on her tongue like a caress. He judged her to be Irish of the home-loving, feminine type. He thought she looked tired and frail. That she was also nervous he was shortly to learn, for as he suddenly reached out his hand to pick up a watch that she had placed among others on the glass showcase, his hand inadvertently brushed hers, and, startled, she drew back quickly, knocking a watch to the stone floor.

She gasped, and stooped quickly to pick it up, and as she raised her frightened face and silently laid the shattered watch on the showcase, Mr. MacIvor was made aware of a new presence. He glanced up, and saw a shop-walker gloweringatthe girl with a

"HER EYES DROOPED BEFORE HIS; SHE SAID NOTHING, BUT MR. MAC IVOR SAW THAT HER LIPS WERE TREMBLING."

black face. Her eyes drooped before his; she said nothing, but Mr. MacIvor saw that her lips were trembling.

"Aye, the shy, speechless sort; from the north of Ireland, it is clear," he thought. "The lass has Scotch blood." He turned to the shop-walker. "It was entirely my own carelessness," he said, affably. "If you will kindly let me know the price of the watch——"

"Oh, no, sir; I couldn't let you, sir!" the girl exclaimed. "I did it myself. I knocked it off."

"So I saw," said the shop-walker, grimly. "Miss Dunbar, if you will attend strictly to business instead——"

Mr. MacIvor turned sharply.

"Tut, tut, man!" he said, acidly. "Am I not to be permitted to acknowledge my own acts? And to pay for them?" He turned his back on the man. "Will you kindly tell me the price, lass?" he said, in an even tone. "I cannot stand here the day chaffering."

"But, sir——"

"Lass, you are a poor, weak simpleton," broke in Mr. MacIvor. "Will you tell me the price and be done with it?"

He paid for the watch, bought another, and as he turned to go, looked up at the girl with one of his rare smiles.

"Forget that I called you a simpleton, lass," he said. "You are not."

With an unwonted feeling of uneasiness, he thought of the girl many times that day, and with the purpose of assuring himself that she had not suffered in any way for the accident that morning, he stopped at the shop again at an hour when he supposed it would still be open at that season, but found it closed and the *employ.'s* streaming forth from the doors in the rear. Joining the throng, he slowly directed his steps toward the Underground.

It was packed at that hour, the air close and heated, and as the train neared his own station and he was pushing his way toward the door, a commotion almost at his side caused him to look up.

He saw that a woman had fainted. He caught a glimpse of her face as it lay still and white against the shoulder of a girl who was supporting it with her arm, and he stopped short. It was the face of the girl who had broken the watch.

"What's the matter with the lass?" he asked. "It is Miss Dunbar, is it not?"

"She fainted," replied the girl who held her. "I never saw her before."

Someone brought smelling-salts, and presently the girl opened her eyes. Mr. MacIvor stooped over her.

"You are better, Miss Dunbar?" he said. "Ah, that is good."

She glanced languidly up, then smiled faintly.

"Oh, the gentleman who paid for the watch," she exclaimed.

"It's been too much for you—that watch," he replied. "The least I can do now is to see that you get home in safety. If you'll tell me your station——"

"Oh, no," she protested. "I can manage now; I'm all right. It was so crowded here that it made me nervous, and——"

"Lass, will you tell me your station without so much clatter?" he said, sternly.

She told him, and he bowed.

"That's better," he said. "Now close your eyes and rest."

He stood before her, saying no more through the long ride until they drew near to her station. For the whole distance she had leaned her head, with closed eyes, against the window-casing. He touched her shoulder gently.

"Now we will get out," he said, and took her arm. As he reached the street he paused to look about him. "Is there a cab-rank near?" he asked.

"But I don't need to be taken, sir," she protested. "It's only a short walk."

"Lass," he said, "the crown of a woman's nature is obedience. Mind that. Now will you answer my question?"

Laughing, she pointed across the street.

"There," she said, demurely.

"I've some hope for you yet," he said, genially. "You're not wholly a simpleton. And you're not stubborn, and you have a glimmering of humour."

He did not speak again until the cab stopped at her door. It was a cheap block of flats in a back street.

"A little toast and tea, and then to bed with you at once," he said, as he assisted her from the cab. "No, no; no thanks. It's only common humanity. Good night to you, lass."

He stepped into the cab, and without a backward look was hurried away.

Two nights later he stopped again at the door of the flat. In the narrow little entry-way he did not find her name among those of the tenants, so descended to the janitor's door and rang the bell. A pleasant-faced woman answered it.

"Madam, does a Miss Dunbar live here?" he asked.

For a moment she looked at him keenly; then her face brightened.

"Sure, you're the kind gentleman who brought her home the night before last," she exclaimed. "I knew you by the quick, dry way of speaking my Katie told about. She does, and God's blessing on you, sir, for a kind heart! It's her mother I am. And will you come in out of the cold? It's blue you are with it this minute."

She flung the door wide and stepped back, but he stood hesitating.

"I only came to the door to inquire whether she had quite recovered," he explained. "I'll not stop, thank you."

"Then come in and see for yourself," she insisted. "You'd not be taking my word for it after the long ride and all. Man, come in out of the cold."

He found the girl still pale, but smiling. The room was neat and cosy. A girl of twelve sat at the table busy with her school books. The mother seated herself near Mr. MacIvor, rolling her hands in her apron as she talked.

"Yes, she's better," she said, "though that's saying little enough, God knows. She's not overstrong, and the work's hard. It's no place for her, and not what I wanted for the child; but she'd have her own way, though I talked till the tongue of me blistered."

"And what did you want?" Mr. MacIvor asked.

"I wanted her to be a teacher," Mrs. Dunbar replied. "Sure, 'tis the fine work for a girl. Through the high school I sent her, and then she met Jimmy, and that was the end and all of my fine hopes. 'It's wasting my time, I am,' says she, 'for now I'll not teach,' and so she went to work in the shop. It's Annie there"—she nodded toward the child at the table—"that I've set my heart on making a teacher of now. If it comes to a young man with her, too, sure I'll drop dead."

"But the other young man," said Mr. MacIvor, hesitatingly. "You do not approve of him?"

"He's like my own son to me, and a good boy," said Mrs. Dunbar, "and doing well, too, God be thanked! But the girl's proud. 'If you must marry,' I tell her, 'then marry and have done with it.' But no. 'Not till I have a trousseau all complete,' says she, and so she goes to work in the shop to get it, and wearing herself out for nothing at all. 'If that's all you brought from school—a French word to make you an unreasonable girl and break a decent lad's heart waiting for you, then God forgive me for ever sending you at all,' says I. But does that stir her, sir? No more than a look stirs a cow. 'What's a trousseau to love?' says I. 'It's heaven and all to a girl's pride,' says she, stubborn.

"But that's Katie, poor and proud. And modest! Sure, sir, she's that modest that there are times when she's made me blush for the very indecency of it! It was God's wonder she didn't drop dead before letting you bring her home that night—a strange man."

A tall young man came in and, nodding gravely, passed behind Katie's chair to a seat on the far side of the room. In passing he had shyly patted the girl's shoulder, and she had looked up with a bright smile. He had a pleasant, frank face, Mr. MacIvor thought.

"It's Jimmy, you know," said Mrs. Dunbar, by way of introduction. She turned to the young man as she added: "It's the gentleman who brought Katie home the night before last. He's come asking after her."

"It's the kind heart you have, sir," said Jimmy. Mr. MacIvor had risen to go.

"I am glad the lass is not ill," he said. He glanced toward her then. "You doubtless find the hours long at the shop in this season. Can you stand it?"

Katie flushed and looked down.

"I'm not there any more," she faltered.

"What?" said Mr. MacIvor, sharply.

"Mr. Morrison—the shop-walker, you know—insulted me, and, sure, I wouldn't stand it from any man; so I left. He had nothing to say. Sure, you paid for the watch."

"He's the limb," declared Mrs. Dunbar. "Arrah! the black face of him would kill an ox."

II.

MR. MACIVOR went slowly home, busy with the plans of a new Christmas scheme. Again he called upon his sister-in-law in Canada to give her unconscious aid, and it was not until the second night after his visit that he again knocked at the door of the Dunbars.

He brought up the matter at once.

"Lass," he said, "I have a job for you—a short one. I need your help. Will you please stand a minute?"

Katie rose, laughing a little, and stood still, flushing in her embarrassment as Mr. MacIvor studied her gravely. At last he waved her to a seat and sat down.

"You'll do," he said. "You have the

same height, the same straight slenderness. And, besides, I have no other way."

"I don't understand," said Katie.

"No, you would not," he replied. "The watch you sold me the day I first saw you was a Christmas present for my brother's wife in Canada; but I've puzzled about a present for her daughter. I've got it at last: I'll send her home to visit the old home in Scotland. She's never been there. But she's up in a wild country far from any towns, and what can she get there fit for a young girl to wear that will not cause her shame on a visit like this? Nothing; so this is my plan, lass: I am going to commission you to buy everything that the niece will need for her journey. Buy as you would buy for yourself in the same circumstances, and buy what you like. We have no time to consult her; your own taste must serve. Besides, it will very likely be better. Will you do it?"

"Oh, it would be the best fun, not work at all!" cried Katie. "And, of course, I'd do it just for the pleasure, if you really think I can do it at all. You have been so kind to me, I couldn't think——"

"Rubbish!" said Mr. MacIvor. "Rubbish, lass!" He rose to go. "I'll send you the money to-morrow morning, and consult with you from time to time. Pay your expenses out of the funds I send—lunches and all. I'm no slave-driver; so don't tire yourself too greatly." At the door he turned back to say, "And, lass, remember that you are to have the dresses made, fitted, you know, for yourself. Nothing ready-made. You are like as two peas. And you'll need a trunk—two, if necessary. You'll know." Then he went away.

By ten o'clock the next morning Katie had a hundred pounds in her possession, with Mr. MacIvor's written promise of more when it was needed.

"It makes my head swim, all that money," she told her mother. "I'll lock it up and not buy a thing to-day. I'll just look around."

"Sure, I'm stone-dead and paralyzed myself," confessed Mrs. Dunbar. "I just open and shut my mouth like a fish."

Two nights later Mr. MacIvor called. He found the table spread with samples of dress-goods, the three Dunbars on their feet. It was clear that they were in the throes of selection. A big new trunk stood by the wall. Mrs. Dunbar led him straight to it. She lifted the lid, took out a tray, and stepped back.

"Musha! the child's at it grand!" she said, and nodded toward the trunk. Mr. MacIvor peered in, then hastily stepped back. It was half-filled with muslin and linen.

"Aye, it's neatly packed," he said. He walked to the table, and they gathered about him. Katie touched two samples placed apart from the rest.

"I can't decide between these," she said, plaintively. "The blue's beautiful, and it's fashionable just now; but I like the brown, too. It's for the outdoor dress."

"It's fine, the brown," said Mr. MacIvor; "it's like the colour on the heather late in the year; but the blue's fine, too, as you say. I've seen the far hills at home look like that in the old days."

"Then you'd take the blue?" said Katie, eagerly. "It *is* pretty, and fashionable, too. That's something."

"I'd not go so far as to say I'd take it," Mr. MacIvor replied, cautiously. "There's much to be said for the brown." He touched both with a hesitating finger, then straightened up with an air of decision. "If you select the brown," he declared, "you'll always regret that you did not choose the blue; and the brown will haunt you if you take the blue. Therefore take both." He looked at Katie with an air of triumph. She laughed gaily.

"But I've never even dreamed of having two new outdoor dresses at one time," she said. "I'm choosing as I'd choose for myself, you know."

"Sometimes we get less than we dream, and sometimes—rarely, I confess—more. So take both, lass. It will not often happen that you can." As though the question had been for ever settled, he walked round the table, and picked up a sample of black.

"That's for a lace dress," Katie explained. "I rather want that; but mother says get a plain black silk. She says it will last all the girl's days. But I don't know."

"Always I've wanted a black silk," said Mrs. Dunbar, "and I've never had it. I never shall. But, sir, there's been times when I've felt I couldn't die without feeling it on my back once. Sure, I'd dance a jig at my own funeral just to hear the rustle of it. I'd not like the niece to feel like that all her life."

Mr. MacIvor nodded.

"I know," he replied. "I recall my own mother; she had the same longing. She hadn't over much in her life. And now there's the mother of the girl we are buying this outfit for; it's likely that it's the same with her, too. They have had little enough of the world's goods, I fear. It's a queer

world." He turned abruptly to Katie. "And she will need a fur coat—the niece," he said, "and maybe a fur hat to match and a muff. Of course, the muff. No imitation fur, mind; but the real fur."

Katie shook her head and smiled.

"I never could have expected that, sir, in the wildest dreams. I am getting what I would buy for myself, you know. You'll spoil the play."

"You're a stubborn lass," he told her, gravely, yet with a twinkle in his eyes. "You will have your own way, like all the women." He drew a card from his pocket and gave it to her. "I'd thought of that, you see," he went on. "That's the address of a furrier, a trustworthy man. I'll meet you there to-morrow at eleven. I'll have the money. And you'll need more before you are through, it is likely. Let me know. Now I must be going. And remember to have the two dresses, the blue and the brown, made at once. We've little time. And by good dressmakers, lass. We'll have nothing meanly done for the poor child in Canada."

Katie sighed happily.

"I feel like a queen all the time, buying and ordering like this," she said.

"The niece will not begrudge you that much," Mr. MacIvor said, gravely. He looked back from the door to say, casually: "I shall need you, too, now, Mrs. Dunbar, I fear. It was thoughtless of me to forget the mother of the niece. She'll care more for that than for a watch. I'll get the silk dress—the black silk—for her, and you must be the model this time. You are much alike in size. Anyway, we can't do anything else. You'll go with Miss Katie to choose the silk, and have it made to fit you. If it doesn't fit the mother of the niece perfectly, it can be changed, I suppose. I hear such things are done. And, Mrs. Dunbar, I was thinking what you said about feeling it on your own back once. Well, that will be part of your pay for all your kindness. The first Sunday it is done, you will wear it at church to please me."

For a moment Mrs. Dunbar stood still; then the tears rushed to her eyes; then she laughed.

"May the saints in Heaven forgive you, sir, if you put a temptation in my way too great to put behind me!" she cried. "Belikes, if I get it on, I'll take it off for no man, I'll be that proud and uplifted. Sure, I'll be so stiff I'll break iron."

"The Sunday you wear it I'll come to see you," said Mr. MacIvor. "We must be ready to send to the niece a fortnight before Christmas. And, Miss Katie, you must buy the black lace dress for the niece. She must take her chances on ever getting the black silk."

When the Sunday came round Mr. MacIvor went to the house at three. Katie, smiling, met him at the door and ushered him into the room. In a straight chair set against the wall Mrs. Dunbar sat enthroned, wearing the black silk dress. Jimmy and Annie were there, smilingly eager, like children at the beginning of a play. Mrs. Dunbar sat stiffly erect.

"Look at me once, and then order me to go take it off, sir," she said to Mr. MacIvor. "God forgive me! but I'm not sure that I will."

"I'm not so sure that I would myself if I looked as handsome as you look, ma'am," Mr. MacIvor replied. He shook hands with them all, then seated himself. Katie walked over to the trunk and lifted the lid.

"Everything is ready and packed, sir, except the dress mother is wearing," she said. "I have a statement of all I have spent and how I spent it. If you'll go over it with me——"

"Yes, yes; of course," said Mr. MacIvor. "We had better be businesslike. But first I should like to see the black lace dress, Miss Katie."

"Of course," said Katie. "It's right here on top. But wouldn't you like to see the party dress, too? It's beautiful. It's in a tray by itself. It's white."

"Oh, no," Mr. MacIvor said, hastily; "only the black lace."

Katie lifted the lace dress tenderly and held it up. For a moment Mr. MacIvor gazed at it gravely; then he shook his head.

"I shall have to take your word for it, lass, that it is all that it should be," he declared; "but it looks rather—unreal to my eyes. Isn't it rather—ah, flimsy? It is more like a limp rag than a dress."

"Why, it's beautiful, sir," Katie laughingly declared. She held it out by the sleeves. "See?"

"Would you mind putting it on for a moment?" he asked. "I think I could visualize it better. Is it asking too much of you, lass?"

"Indeed, it isn't," Katie declared, and, beckoning to Annie, went out.

Mr. MacIvor turned to Mrs. Dunbar, and caught her would-be son-in-law shamelessly grinning at her.

"Ma'am," said Jimmy, "you do not

"SHE CAME IN DEMURELY, WITH EYES DOWNCAST AND AN ANXIOUS SMILE ON HER FACE."

look comfortable, you're buttoned in that tight."

"Comfortable!" she cried. "What's comfort to do with it? Sure, I've never been so uncomfortable since God knows when. I've not breathed a whole breath of life since I put the thing on, for fear of splitting a seam; but, oh, Jimmy, I look grand, and I know it!"

"You do, ma'am; you do," agreed Jimmy. "Sure, you look like the front of the church."

But presently the door opened, and Annie came dancing in.

"She's coming!" she cried, and stood on one foot and then on the other, watching the door. Then Katie entered.

She came in demurely, with eyes downcast and an anxious smile on her face. She paused in front of Mr. MacIvor and turned herself slowly about. He rose to his feet.

"Does it suit you, sir?" she asked. "Is it pretty?"

"It's beautiful," he said, gravely. "I cannot deny that I'm pleased." He glanced at the girl's happy face and murmured softly:—

> "O, saw ye bonnie Lesley,
> As she gaed o'er the border?

You'd make a bonnie bride, lass. And the gown's worthy of you."

"Then everything's all right," exclaimed Katie, "and I'll go and take it off and give you my account." She turned to leave the room, but he called her back.

"Sit down," he said. "I want a word with you first."

She turned back, wondering, and seated herself by the table.

"Lass," he said, shamelessly, "I've lied to you."

"Lied?" she repeated, in her bewilderment.

He nodded almost gaily.

"Yes, I've lied, but I've lied with discrimination. There's excellent polemical authority in justification of a judicious lie. My own land has had some doughty defenders of it."

"But I don't understand," faltered Katie.

"Why, I haven't any niece," Mr. MacIvor explained.

"But this dress, all these beautiful things——" began Katie.

"Yours," he declared.

"But, sir, I couldn't take them," she cried, in distress. "I'd be ashamed. I shall have to return them to you."

"Where?" asked Mr. MacIvor, slyly. "You don't even know my name. All I have got to do is to get up and say good evening, and then disappear, like a fairy godmother. That's what I've been, a fairy godmother." He rose, buttoned his overcoat, and stood smiling down upon her. "Good night, lass, if you must have it," he said.

"But, sir——" she began, falteringly.

"Wait," he said. Standing there, he told them all that had led him to the shop the day he first met her. Then he added: "Thirty years I've lived alone, and in all that time until now I have known no house where I could enter and warm my heart. Will you take that from me now, lassie?"

"Oh, I don't know *what* to say!" she cried. She turned to Mrs. Dunbar, sitting dazed and in tears. "Mother, can't you say *something*—tell me what to do!"

Mrs. Dunbar shook her head.

"For the first time in my life," she declared, "I haven't a blessed word to say of my own. I can think of naught but Paters and Hail, Marys. Sure, they're the only fit company for him."

"It's grand company, ma'am," replied Mr. MacIvor, "but I'm needing more a seat by the fire with my own kind, and heart speaking to heart."

And Katie surrendered. For a moment she sat silent, then suddenly she burst into tears and laughed hysterically.

"I'm thinking of that poor girl in Canada who'll never get all these beautiful things," she cried. "I'm that grieved for her!"

"But there's no such girl, lass, you know," Mr. MacIvor replied. He looked at her triumphantly.

"Oh, I know, sir," said Katie; "but, still, I'm sorry for her. I've thought of her so much that she's real to me. And now she'll have nothing at all, while I have so much."

"We'll forget her in talk of a Christmas wedding," suggested Mr. MacIvor, slyly. He looked at Jimmy and smiled. And Jimmy rose, and, coming forward, gripped Mr. MacIvor's hand.

"Sir," he said, brokenly. "I—I——" He could say no more, and turned shamefaced away.

"The grandest speech I ever heard, lad," Mr. MacIvor said, gently.

UNRECORDED CASES.

Can You Solve Them?

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

INSPECTOR SHARPE, before his death last year, entrusted to me his rather voluminous note-books, of which I was to make no use during his lifetime. One of these books is marked "Unrecorded Cases," and on the first page is the note: "The cases considered in this book have not been recorded at Scotland Yard—for various reasons—but they are for the most part matters that have greatly interested me. Some of the cases I have closely investigated, and they seem to be of permanent value, while others strike me as being somewhat curious, and for that reason worthy of preservation." In making a selection from the book for this article I shall, as far as practicable, give the author's own words.

THE RUBY BROOCH CRIME.

Lady Littlewood, of Romley Manor, had a beautiful but rather eccentric heirloom in the form of a ruby brooch. While staying at her town house she took the jewel to a shop in Brompton for some slight repairs.

"A fine collection of rubies, madam," said the jeweller, to whom her ladyship was a stranger.

"Yes," she replied; "but, curiously enough, I have never actually counted them. My mother once pointed out to me that if you start from the centre and count up one line, along the outside and down the next line, there are always eight rubies. So I should always know if a stone were missing."

Six months later a brother of Lady Littlewood's, who had returned from his regiment in India, noticed that his sister was wearing the brooch one night at a county ball, and asked to look at it more closely. He immediately detected the fact that three of the stones were gone.

"How can that possibly be?" said Lady Littlewood, showing her method of counting, which worked correctly, and which the reader can confirm by examining the illustration. (Fig. 1.)

"Nothing could be simpler," replied the brother. "I know the brooch well. It originally contained forty-four stones and there are now only forty-one. Somebody has stolen three rubies and then reset as small a number as possible in such a way that there shall always be eight stones in any of the directions you have mentioned."

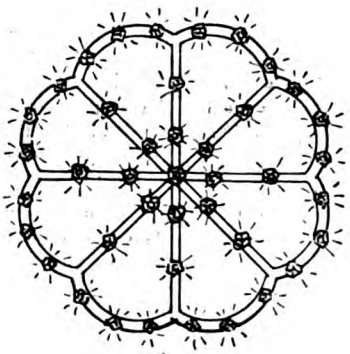


FIG. 1.

On paying a visit to Brompton it was found that the jeweller had disappeared, and he was never traced. The point that is most interesting is to discover how the forty-four stones were originally set, so that as few as possible need be reset to make the brooch appear as shown in its later state.

THE BRONDESBURY BURGLARY.

This case was a burglary of quite an ordinary type. A jeweller's safe was rifled, an alarm was given, and the thief was captured. But the point that interested me most was the ingenuity of the criminal in discovering the word that opened the combination lock. It was a lock with three dials, as shown in our illustration (Fig. 2), and the accompanying diagram (Fig. 3) will make clear the principle on which such locks are constructed. Each dial is connected with one of the round discs and all the discs must be revolved to their proper places, so that when the handle in the centre is turned the three dog-hooks may enter at the same time the three slots in the discs. Only when this is done correctly can the handle be turned and the safe door opened. In order to get those discs in position the three hands or pointers must be all correctly placed according to the prearranged "setting" of the lock. Supposing that they are correctly set in the illustration, then N J F, on the first, second, and third dials respectively, would be the key. As there are 1,728 different ways in which the pointers may be set, it would have taken a long time (unless he had great luck) for the burglar to try them in rotation, while avoiding repetitions, and it was known that he opened the safe in a few seconds. I had a talk with the man after his conviction, and this is what he told me.

He bribed an errand boy to give him the letters on the three dials. He was an educated man who had drifted into crime in early life, and he set to work to discover the probable key. He thought it most unlikely that three letters, such as the N J F that I have given, would be used, as the owner of the safe would be apt to forget them, and he knew that a word was generally employed in these cases. But a word needs a vowel, and the only one on the dials was a Y, which appears twice. He then wrote out a list of three-letter words, with a Y as the only vowel, and considered them in this way. As there is no P, he at once cancelled *ply*, *pry*, *spy*, *hyp*, *gyp*, and *pyx*. As there is no H, he next

struck out *why*, *thy*, and *shy*. Then *try* and *sty* had to go, because there is no T. And the absence of an R made *cry*, *dry*, *fry*, and *wry* also clearly impossible. He told me that his list was then reduced to *sky* and *fly*, but in the first case the only S and K are on the same dial, and in the second case the only F and L are on one dial, so neither of these words would do. Then he had recourse to an English dictionary and at length discovered a good word that would work, and on trial, after he had broken into the house, this proved correct. What was the word? There may possibly be a second, but the right one is the only one I have discovered myself. Of course, we do not know on which dial the first letter appears, nor the order in which the three dials are taken.

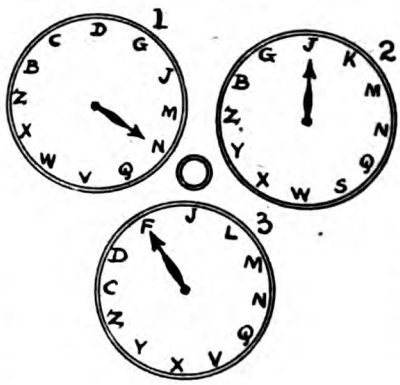


FIG. 2.

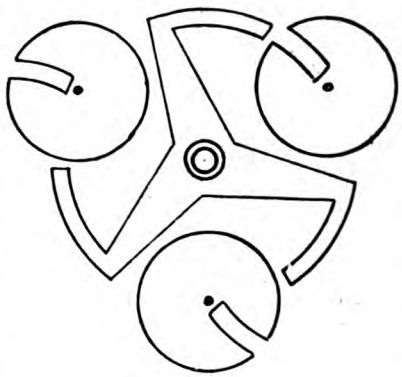


FIG. 3.

STEALING THE BELL-ROPES.

There appeared a "perplexity" in one of the magazines a short time ago (this was THE STRAND MAGAZINE for February, 1914), in which we were told that two men broke into a church tower one night to steal the bell-ropes. The two ropes passed through holes in the wooden ceiling high above them, and they lost no time in climbing to the top. Then one man drew his knife and cut the rope above his head, in consequence of which he fell to the floor and was badly injured. His fellow-thief called out that it served him right for being such a fool. He said he should have done as he was doing, upon which he cut the rope below the place at which he held on. Then, to his dismay, he found that he was in no better plight, for, after hanging on as long as his strength lasted, he was compelled to let go and fall beside his comrade. Here they were both found next morning with their limbs broken.

I am not here concerned with the proposition that arose out of that incident, but I record the case because it reminds me of another in which a single man succeeded in stealing all the six bell-ropes in a belfry without the aid of a ladder or any instrument but his pocket-knife. The six ropes were so far apart that when he climbed one he could not possibly reach another. It puzzled the police to know how the feat was performed, but after his capture and conviction the man explained his method to me. Of course, he could not cut off every rope close to the ceiling, but he got all six ropes with as little "waste" as possible.

THE PIMLICO MURDER.

On the night when Gwendoline Sinclair was murdered a police-constable on duty on the opposite side of the street noticed a man leave the house of the crime in a very excited and suspicious manner and jump into the first hansom-cab that passed and drive away. He was a vigilant officer and promptly observed the number of the cab. But he had lost his pencil and therefore could not enter it in his note-book. So, finding a piece of chalk, he chalked it on a door leading into a backyard. It was a five-figured number, and he abstractedly (he could not say why) multiplied the number formed by the first three figures with that formed by the two last, and then noticed, to his astonishment, that the product gave exactly the same five figures, and in the same order, except that the second and third figures were transposed.

In the morning, when the murder was reported, the constable returned to the door to secure the number of the cab, but one of the servants of the house had carefully rubbed the figures out. He stated the curious facts respecting the number, just as I have related them, and several expert arithmeticians set to work to discover if there were more than one number having the peculiarity. They found 28165, where 281 multiplied by 65 gives 18265, and also 65124, where 651 multiplied by 24 gives 15624, and pointed out that these repeat the same figures with only the first and third transposed. But the constable was positive that it was the second and third figures that changed places. So they tried again and found it, and it proved to be the number of the cab wanted. The vehicle was traced and the criminal captured. What was the number of the cab?

THE STOLEN ALBUMS.

The case in which a well-known philatelist was robbed of three albums containing a valuable collection of postage stamps was interesting as another example of the unexpected uses to which a knowledge of arithmetic may on occasion be put. The police having informed Mr. B—— that it would possibly be of some value in searching for the property if they knew the number of stamps in the books, the owner stated that, as a matter of fact, he had counted them only a day or two before. At the time he had noted these peculiar facts: that the difference between the number in the first volume and the number in the second was exactly the same as the difference between the number in the second volume and the third, and if the contents of any two volumes were united they would form a square number. He showed this to a mathematical friend, who investigated the matter and declared that this could not possibly have happened with any smaller number of stamps. But unfortunately they had destroyed their notes at the same sitting, the mathematician was since dead, and Mr. B—— had not the slightest recollection of the figures. The problem was given to an arithmetical genius, and he worked out the number of stamps in each volume. The album containing the fewest stamps of the three was traced to a dealer, to whom it had been sold, and the thief was caught. I wonder how many people

could have discovered how many stamps there were in each album.

WHO KILLED RATTENBURY?

This curious case was given to me by my old friend Inspector Griggs. He told me that he could not vouch for its having actually occurred precisely as related, but that he believed it was true. I was glad to have the first admission, because I have always had a high opinion of his veracity, but I regretted the final statement, since it shows that he is afflicted with a credulity that I had not suspected. But the problem, true or not, is undoubtedly interesting.

In a certain London district, of which I give a plan (Fig. 4), after a sudden fall of snow in the small hours of a winter's morning, a man named Rattenbury was rung up at his house and murdered on his own doorstep—at the point marked with a cross. At daybreak the officer on the beat, having been called in, made a careful examination of the footprints in the snow. He found

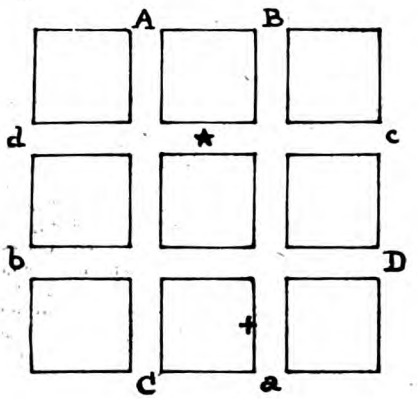


FIG. 4.

that four persons only had entered the district since the fall. A had entered the district at *A* and left it at *a*, B had come in at *B* and left at *b*, C had started from *C* and gone away at *c*, and D had walked from *D* to *d*. Calling the distance from *A* to *B* a "block," or street, each of these four persons had walked exactly six blocks and not more than one man ever passed right along any street or block. As, counting the outsides, there are twenty-four blocks in all, this was apparently quite possible; but the stupid man failed to record the particular route that each man took, and directly the sun rose the snow rapidly disappeared, leaving no traces of the footprints.

Now, the four men were traced. They were Archer, Banks, Curwen, and Drover, and their points of entry and departure are represented by the initials of their names. They all denied having gone down that particular street where the crime was committed. The police worked out various routes fulfilling the officer's conditions, but it was, of course, impossible to say which was the correct one. Then the policeman suddenly remembered that he had met Curwen at the point indicated by a star, and, strange as it may appear, this additional clue fixed the crime on one of the men, who was arrested and convicted on other evidence that was forthcoming later.

Can you discover who killed Rattenbury?

A STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE.

"Pray take a seat and calm yourself," said Inspector Wilson, kindly. He had known Mrs. Mayfield for some years and was anxious to help her in her distress. "Now, tell me exactly what happened, and I have no doubt we shall succeed in clearing up the mystery. There may be a simple explanation of the strange disappearance, and you must not yet talk of crime."

"My husband and I, as you know," began Mrs. Mayfield, "have been married five years, and he has always been the kindest and most considerate of husbands. A short time ago I noticed that Charlie seemed to be far from well. He had become torpid and drowsy, picksome over his food, and indisposed to accompany me on my walks—a form of exercise to which I have always been addicted. I was quite anxious about him, and arranged that we should go to the seaside for a change of air.

"As we drove up to the hotel where we had engaged a bedroom the sun shone out so brilliantly and the air was so exhilarating that I felt in the very best of spirits. But when we had reached our room, which was on the third floor, Charlie at once made for the easy-chair, and when I had finished unpacking the portmanteau I noticed that he was fast asleep and breathing heavily. Thinking I would take a short stroll by the sea while he was resting, I slipped quietly out of the room. Just as I closed the door I glanced back and saw that he was still in the chair, apparently asleep. Just outside on the landing I paused to look inside my purse—to see if I had a slip of paper there with an address that I wanted. It was not there, so I had to return to the room for it. When I opened the door, to my amazement the chair was empty and Charlie was nowhere to be seen. I called him, but there was no reply. I closed the door on the inside and made a careful examination of the room, but it was absolutely certain that he was not there. He had vanished!

"Now, I will describe the plan of the room. To begin with, there was only one door, through which he certainly could not have passed, for it was never out of my sight, and it was not opened between the time of my exit and re-entrance. I was outside about fifteen seconds. The window was as I had left it, open about nine inches from the bottom. On the outside were vertical iron bars, so close together that nowhere was there sufficient room for even a small child to pass, and these bars were secure and intact. Apparently the room had at some time been used as a nursery. There was an ordinary narrow window-ledge outside. I glanced down at the street below and trembled at the mere notion of a fall from such a height.

"I then turned to the fireplace. A heavy chest of drawers was placed in front of it, and it was clearly impossible to gain access to the chimney without first removing this article of furniture. Of course it could not have been removed and afterwards replaced. There was no other exit. The room was so simply furnished that very little search was necessary to determine that Charlie could not possibly be concealed anywhere. I looked into the empty wardrobe, under the bed—everywhere. The floor was entirely covered by a single fitted carpet, which was quite intact. The whitewashed ceiling also presented an unbroken surface. I examined the walls carefully, but there could be no doubt as to their solidity. The appalling fact remained that within the few seconds that I had been outside the room he had totally disappeared—vanished into thin air! I was amazed, I was terrified. But I kept my head. I locked the room and came straight on to you."

Inspector Wilson suggested that they should return to the hotel at once so that he could make a personal examination. They had not gone a dozen steps, when

"THEY HAD NOT GONE A DOZEN STEPS WHEN WHOM SHOULD THEY MEET BUT MRS. MAYFIELD'S HUSBAND!"

whom should they meet but Mrs. Mayfield's husband! He was walking along towards them as calm and composed as if nothing had happened. He soon cleared up the mystery. But how did Charlie get out of the room? It is quite unnecessary to give a plan of the room, as the only exits were, as stated, the door, the window, and the chimney.

THE TRAIL OF THE SMASHER.

The arrest at Liverpool of "Caleb the Smasher," a particularly clever and daring maker of counterfeit coin, was a smart piece of work of which the police are naturally proud. The capture was made by that very astute officer, Detective Wylie. It is a curious fact in the case that there was found upon the prisoner a note-book in which he had carefully entered an account of the number of base sovereigns that he had passed off at each of the numerous towns he had visited. The accompanying map (from which the names of the towns have been removed to avoid unnecessary confusion to the eye) shows all the towns, with the railways connecting them, and the number of coins disposed of in each town (Fig. 5).

Now, the police had an important reason for discovering the exact route of Caleb's last journey from London to Liverpool. It was known that when he set out from London he had fifty counterfeit sovereigns in his possession and that he arrived in Liverpool without any. What route did he take? If, starting from London, you can count exactly fifty, in passing along the roads to Liverpool, you will have discovered the trail of the smasher. It is not difficult to get there with a count of forty-nine or fifty-one, but in order to obtain the exact fifty, you must follow the criminal's trail.

THE SHOOTING OF BROOKS.

Detective Brightman was comfortably seated in a railway carriage on the South-Western line, making a journey to London. A tall gentleman in shooting costume entered and sat opposite to him. The stranger glanced occasionally at the detective in a furtive way, and this excited a certain curiosity in the latter individual himself. He thought the sportsman wore an anxious look and had a decidedly nervous manner, and he watched him carefully over his newspaper as the gentleman tore a leaf from his note-book, scribbled a hasty note, and put it into an envelope which he addressed. Detective Brightman would have given something to know what that note was about. When the train came out of a tunnel and ran up to the Guildford platform the stranger rose from his seat and opened the door. As he stepped out of the carriage the detective quietly kicked something under the seat. It was the letter, which the sporting gentleman had accidentally dropped. As soon as the train had moved out of the station Brightman picked up the letter eagerly. It was addressed

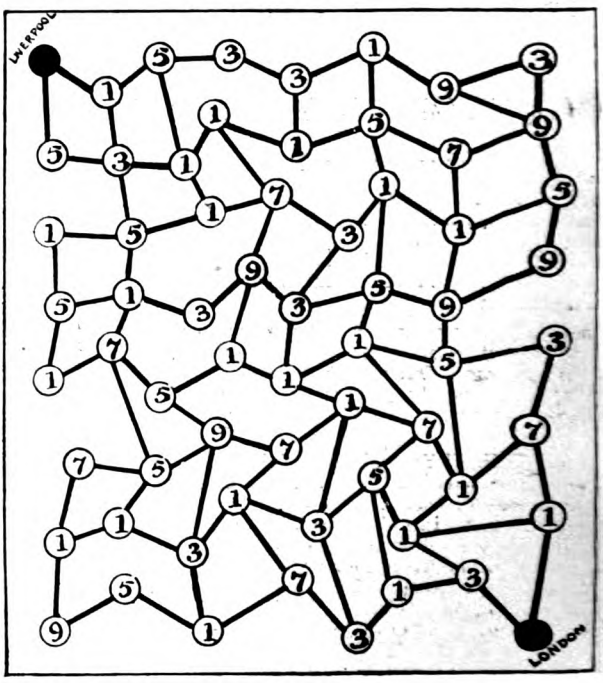


FIG. 5.

to "Philip D. Brown, Esq.," and was not sealed, so he quickly withdrew the contents and read as follows :—

Dear Brown,
I went shooting today with that man Brooks Had an awful quarrel. I shot and killed Brooks. Am going abroad.
Yours,
Henry Morgan.

"Mrs. Brooks, I believe ?"

"That is my name."

"I understand Mr. Brooks is not at home. Quite so. He has been out shooting, I believe? With Mr. Henry Morgan? Exactly. Mrs. Brooks, it is my very painful duty to ask you to read this note. Something serious has happened to your husband. I am sorry to break the news to you so abruptly, but time——"

Mrs. Brooks snatched the strip of paper from the detective's hand and hastily read the fateful note. As she did so she burst into a peal of hearty laughter. At first the detective was horrified at the lady's callous behaviour; then he realized, as he thought, that it was hysterics.

"Pray calm yourself," he said, at which Mrs. Brooks again broke into loud laughter.

"Can I be of assistance to you? What do you propose to do ?"

"Nothing," she replied, with a smile.

"Nothing! But surely you realize the nature of the contents of that note ?"

"Perfectly."

"Is it false ?"

"On the contrary, every word is undoubtedly strictly true."

"True! And yet you can laugh at this terrible deed and tell me that you intend to do nothing! Madam, I can only express my profound surprise, and assure you that this matter will be at once investigated by the police. My name is Detective Brightman. I wish you good day."

* * * * * *

The superintendent of police took the strip of paper and read it through.

"H'm! You could identify the man who wrote this ?"

"Certainly," replied Detective Brightman.

"And the wife, or rather widow, admits that the statements are perfectly true ?"

"Yes. But she treated the whole matter in a brutally indifferent and flippant way. She actually laughed at it. I say laughed! Positively shrieked with laughter! In all my wide experience I never before came across such a woman. Even assuming that her husband was an utter scoundrel, she has a heart of stone."

"Wait a minute," said the superintendent. "Let me read it over carefully."

The officer read it over to himself slowly, two or three times. Then he suddenly threw himself back in his chair and went into such a fit of boisterous laughter that the detective was really afraid he would have apoplexy. Curiously enough, when he had recovered his speech and explained matters to Detective Brightman, that individual laughed, but grimly. The police declined to arrest Mr. Morgan. Why ?

A facsimile of the original note by Morgan is given, so the reader is in the same position as the superintendent of police. If he examines the document carefully he will discover why it was impossible to arrest the writer.

[The solutions to the above mysteries will appear in the next number.]

SOLUTIONS TO LAST MONTH'S PERPLEXITIES.

274.—"STRAND" PATIENCE.

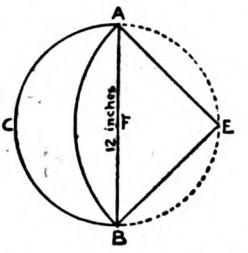
THE reader may have found a solution quite easy in a little over 200 moves, but, surprising as it may at first appear, not more than 62 moves are required. That is my present record. Perhaps some reader can beat it ?

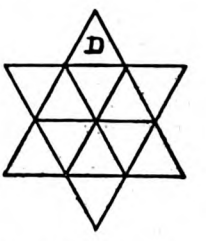
275.—SAWING THE LOGS.

IF the logs are 6ft. long there will be half the number of those in a cord of 3ft. logs. But the 6ft. logs will require five cuts each, to the two cuts needed in the case of 3ft. logs. Therefore, the proportion of work is as 2½ to 2, and the price should be 12s. 6d., as compared with 10s.

276.—THE CRESCENT AND THE STAR.

THOUGH we cannot square a circle, certain portions of a circle may be squared, as Hippocrates of old first discovered. If we draw the circle in the diagram and then, with the point of the compasses at E, draw the arc B A, the area of the lune or crescent is exactly the same as the area of the triangle A B E. As we know the line A B to be 12in., the area of the triangle (and therefore of the crescent) is obviously 36 square inches Also, as the triangle D is known to contain 3 square inches, the star, which is built up of twelve such triangles,





contains 36 square inches. Therefore the areas of the crescent and the star were exactly the same.

277.—MORE BEHEADING.

PREACH—REACH—EACH—ACH !

278.—AN OLD TWO-MOVER.

THE key move is 1. P to Kt 8 (becoming a knight).

THE TRADE THAT NO ONE KNEW.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

Retold by FLORENCE TAPSELL from the Serbian.

Illustrated by H. R. Millar.

IN a certain town in Serbia there once lived a peasant man and his wife who had one son, of whom they were very fond—so foolishly fond that they had taught him to look upon it as his right always to have his own way and the best of everything that his parents could afford to give him.

One day, when Margo was almost grown up, he said to his parents, "I am a man now and intend to marry, so do you go to the King and ask him to give me his daughter for a wife."

His father and mother looked at him in amazement. "Are you mad? What can you be thinking of?" they cried. "How can we, who are but poor wood-cutters living in a tiny hut, expect the King to as much as speak to us, let alone give you his daughter for a wife?"

But Margo made such a fuss and they had grown so accustomed to doing his bidding that at last his mother promised to go and see the King. "Though," she said, "it is certain I shall never return, for he will surely put me into prison, or maybe cut off my head for taking such a liberty."

But she loved her wayward son far more than her own life or liberty, so the very next morning, staff in hand, she trudged over the hill to the palace where the King lived. The soldiers at the door took her for one of the poor people to whom the King daily gave alms, so they led her straight into the hall where his Majesty sat. But the hall was so grand and there were so many fine people about that the poor woman stood shivering and shaking before the King, for all the world as if she had the ague. Again and again she tried to tell him the reason of her visit, but not a word could she speak. At last the King, seeing her agitation, said, kindly enough, "Come, mother, tell me what it is you wish."

Even then she had not the courage to say that her son had sent her to ask for the hand of his daughter. She could only stammer, "I did not mean—at least, I wanted to ask——" then gave it up as a bad job, and said, hurriedly, "No, there is nothing, your Majesty."

The King, thinking her too modest to ask for the alms he supposed she needed, smiled, and said, "Perhaps you are in great need and have come to ask for money. If so, do not be afraid to speak."

"Your Majesty has guessed rightly," said the woman, seizing with thankfulness the opening he had thus provided, although never in her life before had she asked alms of anyone, even of a King.

The King, always kind-hearted, called his steward and told the man to give her ten pieces of gold. She thanked him and set off for home. No sooner had she entered the door of the hut than Margo sprang up, crying, "Well, mother, did the King say I may marry his daughter?"

"My son," she replied, "you must put that foolish idea out of your head once and for all. Of course, I could not ask the King for his daughter; but see what he has given me, and you shall have it all. With this money you will be able to marry some nice girl who is your equal in rank and a fit match for you."

But the young man was not going to be put off with money or soft words. Dashing the gold pieces upon the floor, he cried, "I don't want the King's money! It is his daughter I want and whom I mean to have. If you, my mother, will not do this for me I will go away—far away where you will never see me any more."

His father and mother begged Margo not to leave them, for he was all they had, and at last his mother promised that if he would only stay at home she would go again to the King, and this time would really ask him to allow his daughter to marry her son.

So once more the old woman set out for the palace, and, much sooner than she wished it, found herself standing, for the second time, before the King's throne. "Well, mother," the King was saying to her, "what do you wish me to do for you to-day?" and this time Margo's mother forced herself to give the real reason for her coming.

Much to her surprise, instead of having her carried off to prison, the King said, "Don't look so frightened, mother. I have nothing to say against it so long as my daughter is willing," and calling the princess to his side, he said to her, "Tell me, daughter, are you willing to marry the son of this peasant woman?"

The princess smiled sweetly at Margo's mother, as she replied, "As you say, why not? I am willing; but before he claims me he must learn a trade that no one else knows. Will you tell him this?"

"That I will," replied the woman, "and right willingly too, for you are very bonny, and, I am sure, as sweet and good as you are bonny. I should like well to have you for a daughter"; and she hurried home with a light heart."

At the door her son met her. "Have you gained the King's consent?" he cried. "Answer me quickly. I cannot wait for the news."

"Yes, it is true I asked for the King's consent, and he gave it with no more ado than if I had asked him for a copper coin, and what is more, the princess herself says she is ready to marry you. But," she added, as Margo began to caper about the little room in his delight, "have a care, my son, and break not *all* our china, for she says she will not marry you until you have learned a trade that no one else knows."

This piece of news in no way damped the lad's wild joy. "No matter about that," he cried. "I will travel over the world and will soon find a trade no one knows. That will be easy enough."

Now that he knew the princess was willing to marry him, Margo could not wait, so before the sun rose the next morning he was off and away on his travels—in search of a trade that no one knew.

For a very long time he wandered over hill and dale without success. One day, weary and sad, he was musing upon the perplexing ways of the world when an old woman came and sat by his side. "You don't look over merry, my son. What ails you?" she said.

"I want to learn a trade which no one else knows, and though I have searched through and through the world there does not seem to be such a thing," he answered, sadly.

"Oh, is that all?" piped the old woman, as if it were nothing at all. "Why, that is easily found. All you have to do is to make your way straight to the centre of the forest. You will find what you want there fast enough."

Margo was so glad to hear this that after thanking the old woman for the news he sprang to his feet and ran on into the thickest part of the wood. There he found a great castle, standing grim and gaunt in the dimness

of the forest. He made his way quickly towards it. At his approach four giants came running out, but they appeared to be quite friendly giants, for they shouted in their giant-like voices, "Our mother has told us. You wish to learn a trade that no one else knows. Is it not so?"

"Yes, indeed it is," replied the lad, in no way taken aback by the size of the four men before him. "I suppose it was your mother, then, who told me I should find it within this forest?"

"Yes, it was our mother, and as she said so you will find," replied the tallest of the giants; and they took him into the castle and made him welcome.

The next morning the four giants made ready to go hunting in the forest. Margo asked if he might not go with them, but they said, "If you would learn such a trade as you desire you must stay within the walls of the castle. But this you need not mind, for you may do just as you please and go where you will save into the first room on the right-hand side of the great hall." Then they left him to his own devices.

For some time Margo amused himself well enough, exploring and examining everything within the castle; but towards the end of the day nothing remained to be seen, save that which was within the door of the first room on the right-hand side of the hall.

"Probably in any case the giants will kill and eat me when they return home, so I can't see that it matters very much whether I obey them or not," argued the lad to himself, and made his way to the forbidden door. Cautiously he opened it just a teeny-weeny crack and peeped in. But no sooner had he peeped within than he started back so suddenly as nearly to pinch his nose in the crack of the door; and really the sight that met his eyes was enough to make anybody start, for within the room was a shining, golden ass, fastened to a golden manger. After a hasty glance Margo was just going to shut the door when he started again, and even more violently than before, for the ass was speaking to him. "Take the halter from my head and bind it about your body. You will need it soon," were the words it said.

Margo thought it best to be on the safe side, so he took it and bound it about his body, then went out of the room, carefully locking the door behind him.

Soon after this the giants returned from hunting in the forest. How they knew, the lad could not say, but no sooner did they see him than they seized hold of him, crying, "You have been into the forbidden room"; then they beat him so unmercifully that had it not been for the halter bound about his body he would have been in a very bad way indeed. As it was, the halter saved him from their blows, so that he felt none of them.

The next day the giants again went out to hunt, and this time they told Margo it was the second room on the left-hand side of the hall into which he must not go. But, thinking to himself that he had come safely out of the first, the lad only waited until the giants were out of sight before he opened the second door on the left-hand side of the hall and peeped in. Within this room he saw a beautiful maiden, dressed all in gold and silver. She was seated upon a pile of silken cushions, combing her hair and setting sparkling diamonds among the tresses she had combed.

Fascinated by her loveliness, Margo stood and watched her. Then, realizing he was intruding where he had no right to be, he was just about to close the door when, without even turning her head, the maiden said, "Wait a minute, boy. Take this key, and mind you keep it safely. One day it will serve you well if you only know how to use it."

Though he felt very awkward and very shy Margo crossed the room and took the key from the maiden; then he shut and locked the door, and returned to the hall of the castle to await the return of the giants. Very soon he not only saw but felt their presence, for this time they did not even wait to ask if he had been into the forbidden room, but took up their sticks and beat him longer and harder than before, so that had it not been for the halter he would have been killed.

The next morning, as usual, the giants set out to hunt. "Do what you will and go where you please, save into the room at the far end of the hall. If you enter that room we will kill you when we return," they said, as they prepared to set off.

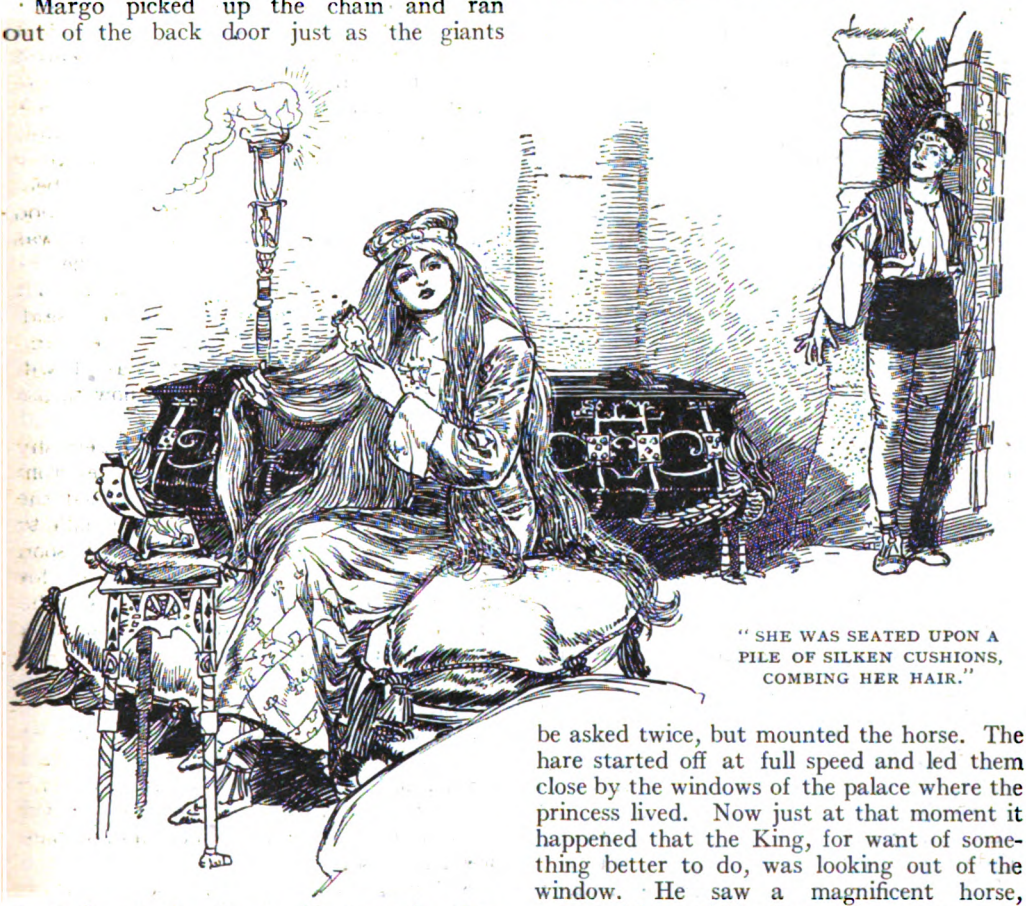
But Margo had had such good luck up to now that he had no fear of them and their threats. Almost before they were out of the castle yard he strode boldly to the door at the far end of the hall and opened it. But he little knew the terrible shock that was in store for him there. At the very first glance creepy feelings ran all down his back and into his toes, for the room was full of human heads. They were the heads of the young men who, like himself, had tried to learn a trade that no one else knows.

He was just about to shut the door and run out into the warm and comforting sunshine

when he jumped still more, for one of the heads said, "Don't be afraid. Come to me, and I will give you something you are much in need of."

Screwing his courage up from his boots Margo entered the room. The head nodded towards an iron chain that lay upon the ground. "Take that chain," it said. "It will serve you in time of need if only you know how to use it, and then you will have learned the trade that no one knows."

Margo picked up the chain and ran out of the back door just as the giants



"SHE WAS SEATED UPON A PILE OF SILKEN CUSHIONS, COMBING HER HAIR."

came in at the front. Fortunately, they did not see him, and they were too weary to trouble themselves about him just then.

As for Margo, he did not waste any time, I can tell you. He travelled hard and fast until he had put a good many miles between himself and the castle. Then, and not until then, did he sit down to rest and to think.

This is what he thought. "The head said I had learned the trade that no one knows, but what is it?" Then he remembered the halter, the key, and the chain that had been given him. "I wonder what is the use of them," he thought. "It may be they are something to do with the trade," and as he spoke he idly struck the halter upon the ground.

Immediately a beautiful horse, with rich bridle and trappings, stood before him, and he himself was dressed in a riding suit fit for a prince. In his surprise Margo let the chain fall upon the ground. Instantly a hare appeared and stood before him as if challenging him to chase it. Margo, who loved nothing better than sport of all kinds, did not wait to be asked twice, but mounted the horse. The hare started off at full speed and led them close by the windows of the palace where the princess lived. Now just at that moment it happened that the King, for want of something better to do, was looking out of the window. He saw a magnificent horse, mounted by a richly-dressed huntsman, pass by at lightning speed. Wishing to see more of horse and rider, he sent out some of his men to invite the huntsman into the palace.

Margo, however, had no wish to meet the King just then, so he rode behind a clump of bushes and dismounted. As he jumped from the horse, the chain, which he held in his hand, shook. As the chain shook the horse vanished and Margo found himself again dressed in his old, shabby clothes, standing alone among the bushes.

Just at that moment one of the King's

men came up. Seeing the lad standing there, he asked, "Have you seen a fine horseman pass this way?"

"No," replied Margo, gruffly, in such a way as to match his clothes. "I have seen no one pass, nor do I care a jot who may have passed or who may have not."

"Perhaps not, Grumpy, but you might have answered a civil question in a civil manner," said the man, and went on his way; but though the King's men searched through and through the forest they found no one, and at last were obliged to return to the palace and tell the King they could find neither horse nor huntsman.

As for Margo, thinking he had had enough of adventures for the time being, he went back to the hut where his parents lived. But in the night he had a dream—a dream which showed him clearly the trade that no one knows, and told him the full value of the gifts he had received.

The next morning he was anxious to prove that his dream was true, so he said to his father, "Father, I am going to change myself into a horse, and you shall lead me to the city and sell me for a great deal of money; but you must remember not to sell, or even to give away, the halter that is round my neck, or I shall have to remain a horse for ever."

Before his father could reply Margo had changed himself into a horse of surprising beauty, strength, and swiftness. The old man looked the animal up and down, for he could not make it out at all; but he was used to taking life as he found it and obeying the words of his son, so he took hold of the halter and led the horse to the market-place.

The news soon spread abroad that a wonderful horse was for sale at the market, and the King, hearing of it, sent a man to bring the animal to the palace. "Never in all my life have I seen such a horse!" he cried, and was ready to give whatever price the old man liked to ask for it.

Margo's father was ready enough. "Right willingly will I sell the horse to your Majesty. But there is one thing I would ask before I part with it," he said.

"And what is that?" asked the King, expecting some great request.

"It is that I may be allowed to keep the halter, please, your Majesty," faltered the old man, as if he feared the anger of the King.

But the King only laughed. "What do you think I want with your old halter," he said. "For such a horse as this no halter but one of gold is meet, and a golden halter he shall have." Thus the bargain was made.

But the very next morning there was such a commotion at the palace as you never heard, for the beautiful horse that the King had bought had vanished during the night. Meanwhile the young man returned to his parents' hut and lived quietly with them as of old.

But Margo did not approve of living the simple life for long at a time, so it was but a few days later that he said, "Father, to-day I am going to turn myself into a fine church. Go to the King and ask if he will buy it, only be sure you do not part with the key, or I shall have to remain a church as long as churches last."

A little later the King, looking out of his window, saw a magnificent church pointing its shapely steeple to the skies within a short distance of the palace. "Dear me," he thought, "I am sure I have never seen that church before," and he sent a servant to ask to whom it belonged.

The servant soon returned saying the church belonged to an old pilgrim who was willing to sell it if the King wished.

The King, who always liked to have the best of everything, was only too anxious to buy, and told the servant to go at once and make the best bargain he could.

While the business of buying the church was being transacted an old woman came hobbling up. It was the mother of the four giants. She knew the secrets of the halter, the key, and the chain, and had no mind to allow this young man to practise the unknown trade on his own account, so up she trotted and began to outbid the King for the possession of the church. Higher and higher became the bidding, until such a price was named that the servant knew the King would be unable to pay, so the old woman had her way and became the owner of the church.

As for Margo's father, he was so confused at the sight of such a sum of money that he forgot all about his son's words, and when the old woman asked him for the key of the church he handed it to her as meekly as a lamb. But no sooner had she hobbled, chuckling, away, than he remembered. "Oh, my son, my son, what have I done?" he cried, and running after the old woman implored her to return the key to him.

But she only laughed in his face, saying, "What is the use of buying a church if I have not the key by which I may enter?"

Seeing persuasion was useless the frantic old man tried to snatch the key from her; but no sooner had his hand touched it than the key was turned into a dove, which flew

away over the trees in the direction of the palace gardens.

When she saw what had happened the old woman was in a towering rage. She changed herself into a hawk and began to chase the dove; but just as she swooped down, ready to pounce upon it, the bird was changed into a flower, which fell into the hand of the princess as she was walking in the gardens of the palace.

The old woman, angry at again being baulked of her prey, resumed her natural form and hurried to the gate of the palace. She reached it just as the princess was about to pass through, and begged that she would give her the flower she held in her hand.

But the princess said, "This flower I cannot part with, for it was sent me by the gods straight from the heavens; but here is money with which you may buy flowers for yourself."

However, the witch was not at the end of her resources even yet. She went to the King and, weeping bitterly as she spoke, begged that he would persuade his daughter to give her such a simple thing as she had asked—the flower the princess held—that she might lay it upon the grave of one who was dear to her.

"BUT AS SHE HELD THE FLOWER OUT TO THE OLD WOMAN IT WAS CHANGED INTO A HEAP OF GRAIN, WHICH A SUDDEN GUST OF WIND SCATTERED AT HER FEET."

The King, sorry for the woman's apparent grief, called his daughter to him and bade her give up the flower.

As soon as she heard the purpose for which it was wanted the princess readily consented; but as she held the flower out to the old woman it was changed into a heap of grain, which a sudden gust of wind scattered at her feet.

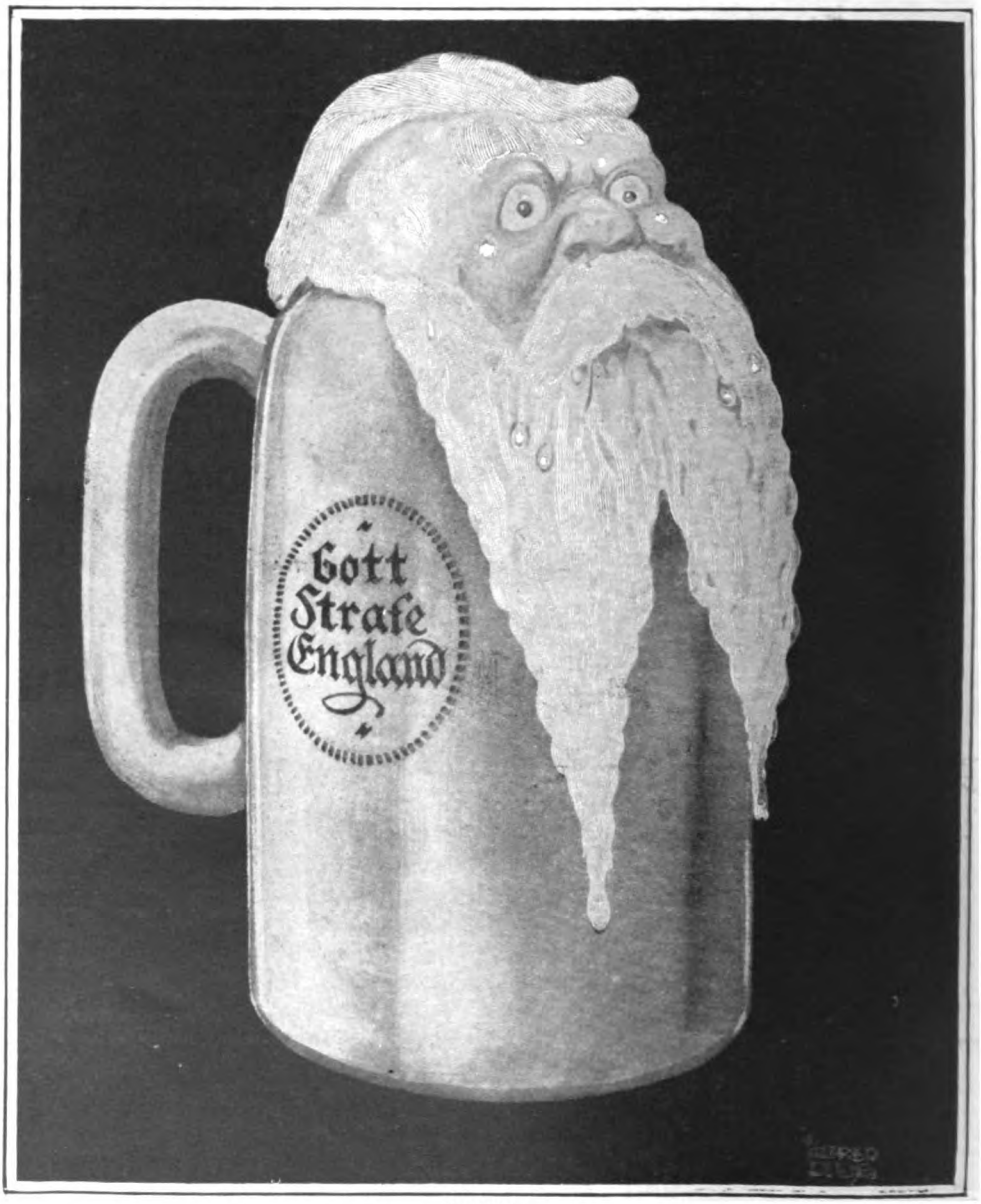
Not yet vanquished, the old woman quickly changed herself into a hen and seven chicks. They all ran to gobble up the seeds; but before they could swallow as much as a grain of the corn a wily old fox appeared upon the scene, sprang upon the hen and chickens, and ate them all up.

Then the grain gathered itself into a head and was changed into a key. The princess stooped to pick it up. At the touch of her hand the key vanished, the church faded into thin air, and a handsome young man stood before her. It was Margo.

He told her how he had learned a trade that no man knew—the art of changing himself into any form he wished, and the princess, seeing how handsome he was, and liking the look of him very much, was glad to keep her promise and marry him.

"As Funny as They Can."

In order to set before our readers the cream of the year's pictorial humour, we have asked the most eminent black-and-white artists of the day the following question: "Which do you consider your funniest drawing of the year?" The result can scarcely fail to amuse even the most gloomy of war pessimists.

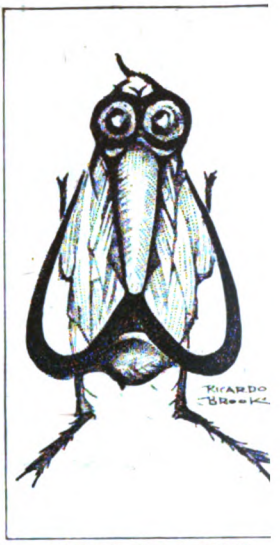


FROTH!
SELECTED BY ALFRED LEETE.
By permission of the "Sketch."

THE SAILOR: "Blimey! Submarined!"

SELECTED BY F. BUCHANAN.

By permission of the "London Illustrated Weekly."



"SWAT THAT FLY."
(The "Willy" or Prussian Bluebot Fly.)

SELECTED BY R. BROOK

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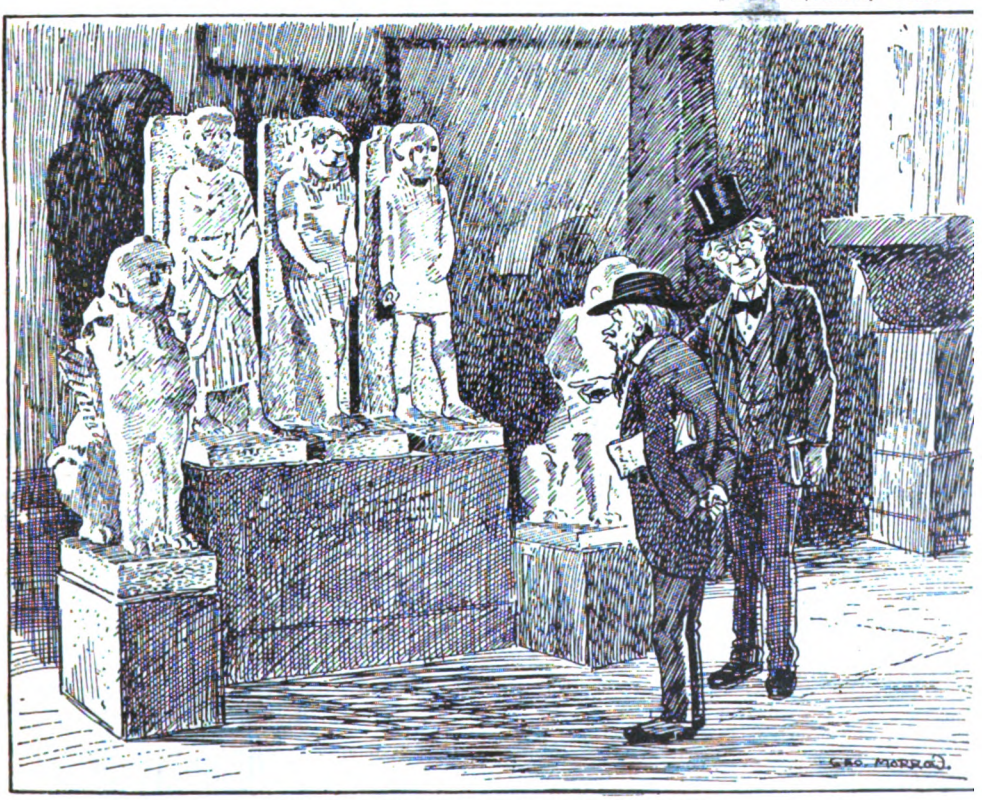


THE WAR SPIRIT AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

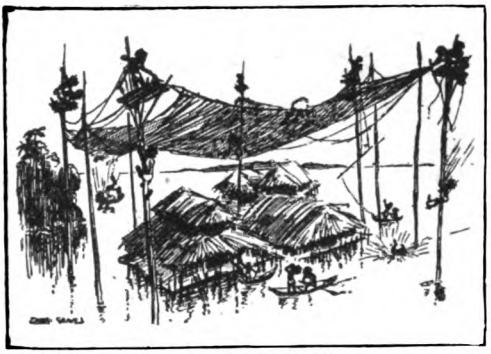
ARDENT EGYPTOLOGIST (who has lately joined the Civic Guard): "No, I seem to have lost my enthusia for this group since I noticed that Bes-Hathor-Horus was out of step with the other two."

SELECTED BY GEO. MORROW.

Reproduced by the special permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

THE SLACKER.
SELECTED BY FRANK REYNOLDS.
Reproduced by the special permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

WHAT THE WAR OFFICE HAS TO PUT UP WITH—THE BOMB-CATCHER.
SELECTED BY HARRY ROUNTREE.
Reproduced by the special permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."



THE WAR FEVER.

Guarding a chief's house against airship attack in New Guinea.

SELECTED BY CHAS. GRAVE.

Reproduced by the special permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

PATERFAMILIAS (suddenly awakened by loud report): "Zeppelins again!"

SELECTED BY FRANK STYCHE.

By permission of "London Opinion."

COMMANDER OF GERMAN SUBMARINE: "I beg your pardon. I thought you were a hospital ship."

SELECTED BY JOHN HASSALL.

By permission of the "Star."

A NEW GAME FOR A WINTER'S EVENING.
Submarine attacking Dreadnought.
SELECTED BY G. E. STUDDY.
By permission of the "Sketch."

MR. AND MRS. KRUPP (AND YOUNG KRUPP) AT TEA.
A fancy portrait group.
SELECTED BY W. HEATH ROBINSON.
By permission of "London Opinion."

THE REWARD OF KULTUR.
SELECTED BY G. L. STAMPA
Reproduced by the special permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

CURIOSITIES.

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

THE STRANGE STORY OF A GRAIN OF WHEAT.

LANCE-CORPORAL W. WEST, Gordon Highlanders, who was one of the first batch of wounded to arrive at the Middlesex Convalescent Home, Clacton-on-Sea, unknowingly brought home a war trophy in his boot. The gallant lance-corporal

was wounded in the foot at Mons, the bullet, which was an expanding one, passing through his foot and out under the sole. The perforation where the bullet entered was very small, but its exit was marked by a hole nearly two inches across. Mr. G. Lurcock, who visited the hospital with some friends, was shown the boot by the wounded warrior, and discovered a grain of wheat sticking in the dry blood. The grain was given as a souvenir to Mr. Lurcock, who forwarded it to his brother in Kent, who planted it and attended to it during the year, with the result that the harvest was bountiful, twenty-five ears of corn being produced from the one grain of wheat. Such a novelty attracted crowds of people to see it, and Mr. Lurcock placed a board at the foot of the growing wheat with the following inscription: "Corn grown from a grain of wheat taken from a boot of a wounded soldier after the battle of Mons."

AN INGENIOUS "GET-RICH-QUICK" SCHEME.

SOME little time ago a friend of mine received the following letter, which I think will amuse STRAND readers:—

Dear Sir,—Knowing that you have some interest in the stock business, I take the liberty of presenting to you what seems to me a most wonderful business proposition, and in which you will no doubt take a lively interest, and perhaps advise me as to the amount of stock that you wish to subscribe towards the formation of this company.

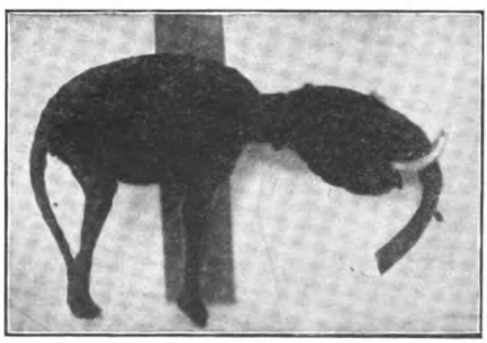
The object of the company is to operate a large cat ranch in or near to ———, where the land can be purchased cheap for this purpose. To start with we collect, say, one million cats. Each cat will average twelve kittens a year. The skins run from 10 cents each for the white ones to 75 cents for pure black, the average being 30 cents apiece, making our revenue 10,000 dollars a day gross. A man can skin fifty cats a day for two dollars. It will take one hundred men to operate the ranch, and therefore the net profit will thus be about 9,800 dollars a day. We will feed the cats on rats, and will start a rat ranch next door. A rat multiplies four times as fast as a cat. If we start with a million rats, therefore, we shall have four rats a day for each cat. Now, then, we will feed the rats on the carcasses of the cats from which the skins have been taken, giving each rat one fourth of a cat.

It will thus be seen that the business will be self-acting and automatic all the way through. The cats will eat the rats and the rats will eat the cats, and we will get the skins. I await your prompt reply and trust that you appreciate the opportunity that I give you, and will get rich quick.

—Mr. S. Needham, 17, Binswood Avenue, Leamington Spa.

A WATER ELEPHANT.

THE accompanying photograph shows a species of water elephant standing against a foot rule, which measures not more than three inches in height. These queer creatures are found in the Salween River, near Moulmein, and are said to be very rare. It is believed by the Burmans that the ordinary elephant will not enter a river if there is a water elephant about, as they drive their ~~little~~ tusks into the big elephants and poison them. ~~This~~ one, which I photographed in Moulmein, was found hanging on an elephant's leg



one evening on his return from his bath in the river. It was killed and cured, but since the photograph was taken it has been stolen from a chemist's stores, as it is said to be very valuable. This specimen is a full-grown one, and is said to be between forty and fifty years old.—Mr. Frank Molyneux Wagstaff, Leighton Lodge, Prome Road, Insein, Rangoon, Burma.

ANOTHER ANAGRAM LETTER.

SO much interest was aroused by the anagram letters we have published from time to time that we think our readers may like to amuse themselves with another. Perhaps we need scarcely add that each word, or group of words, printed in heavy type may be formed into a single word, thus making perfect sense when the whole is read. The solution will be given next month.

My dear **Tin Heater,**

I have **Joe Deny** the visit with my old **Castle Sam,** in spite of a little **goat slain.** There is not much to do here, but **her tact** over **cads so Holy,** which while **eating in rent,** sometimes proves **a wise Rome.** You know John is a sort of **alibi in a comb.** To illustrate—To-day he drifted on **to Holy Gym** and gave me the **Nemo car** of **a mad drone** which was **in tigers net.**

By rifle, this **cent harness** was the **edge or zinc** beauty of that time. Once while **tin cents go** for **mace syrup** with the **huge dart** of Saturn and the **side rein,** they, fearing defeat, had her **cut bedad,** chained to a **no pry motor,** and left to her fate with **anvil heat.** This **placid bees-calm on levee** was, however, to be **rafter dust,** for in spite of the **O pious turnip** outlook and the **sin hired agent** surroundings of **one arm dad,** already **Denver Alice** was at hand.

The devoted **sere ups** quickly learning of this **menaced trip,** hastened in search of and soon found his **swear teeth,** disposed of **"A vital hen,"** and after **Eve rings** the chains carried **dead Roman** away to his castle. **Tom in Army** completes the **train rave.**

In spite of his **crisis day noise,** of all my old friends John is staunchest. He sends you **a stout snail** and says he hopes you will enjoy this **oyster pail** effort, in which he has **a real cold bot.** I trust that I shall not receive **tire to rub in** for this **Ionic flint** when I return next Tuesday.

Yours ever **Lying Dora,**
RIPE HAM.

BRIDGE PROBLEM.

BY VLADIMIR DE ROZING.

Hearts—Ace, 10, 8, 2.
Diamonds—Ace, king, 10, 8.
Clubs—Jack, 10, 9, 7.
Spades—Queen.

Hearts—King, 9, 5.
Diamonds—9, 6, 4, 3, 2.
Clubs—4, 3, 2.
Spades—9, 6.

A
Z Y
B

Hearts—7, 6.
Diamonds—Queen, jack, 7, 5.
Clubs—King, 8, 6, 5.
Spades—King, jack, 2.

Hearts—Queen, jack, 4, 3.
Clubs—Ace, queen.
Spades—Ace, 10, 8, 7, 5, 4, 3.

A and B are 22. A declares hearts. Y leads the jack of diamonds. A and B are to make a grand slam.

(The solution will be given next month.)

MINIATURE FLOATING GARDENS.

A VERY interesting way of growing crocus and other small bulbs is shown in the accompanying photograph. For the purpose a few large corks are secured, and holes are made right through these.

The openings in the corks should be just large enough to accommodate a bulb, and more than one hole may be made where there is room. The corks are then floated on a big bowl of water, and as they grow they will send their roots downwards. It is, of course, understood that when fitting the bulbs in the corks the top part bearing the shoots is placed uppermost. When the bulbs are in blossom, small pieces of moss may be arranged to cover the tops of the corks, and the effect is very pretty.—Mr. S. Leonard Bastin, 31, Castlemain Avenue, Bournemouth.

HOW FAR DOES THE BOOKWORM TRAVEL?

THE "Life of the Emperor Vitellius" is in three unbound volumes of 100 pages each, and the thickness of each volume is one inch. They stand in order on a shelf, and a bookworm eats its way from vol. 1, page 1, to vol. 3, page 100. Calculate how far it travels.

[Solution will be given next month.]

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

CAN any STRAND readers make sense of the following:—

"FOR LACK OF WATER WE DRANK WATER, BUT IF WE HAD HAD WATER WE SHOULD HAVE DRUNK WINE."

Unintelligible as the sentence appears at first glance, it becomes perfectly clear if the circumstances under which it was written are taken into account.—Corporal R. McCarthy, 5th Batt. The Rifle Brigade.

[The explanation will appear next month.]

A REMINDER!

Do not forget that "The Strand" may now be sent free of all charge to British soldiers and sailors at home or abroad. All you need do is to hand your copies, without wrapper or address, over lthe counter at any post-office in the United Kingdom, and they will be sent by the authorities wherever they will be most welcome.

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